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## ENGLISH ATTITUDES TOWARD THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION

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*Michigan State College, East Lansing*

### I.

The terms "Reformation" and "Renaissance" have acquired such currency that they have come to be accepted as denoting what really and truly happened, and in fact, the words themselves are regarded as the guarantee of the actuality of the phenomena they merely have been coined to describe. The matter of defining accurately and precisely the meaning of both the Reformation and the Renaissance has occasioned so large and disputatious a body of scholarship<sup>1</sup> that it is with some trepidation that I add another question to an already sufficiently vexing problem. For not only must the meaning of the Reformation and the Renaissance be defined in themselves but the relationship between them must be clearly stated as well. The fact of the matter is that the relationship between the two has an existence and nature as real and as significant as they have in themselves, for since the one without the other is impossible of full definition, what then is the exact relationship between them? What are the origins of this relationship and how did it develop and come to be regarded? I have tried to answer these questions in this paper; to simplify

<sup>1</sup> The most recent survey of the development of the Renaissance problem since Burckhardt is the succinct account given by Professor De Filippis in "The Renaissance Problem Again," *Italica*, XX (1943), 65-80. Other brief surveys are those by Roland H. Bainton, "Changing Ideas and Ideals in the Sixteenth Century," *JMH*, VIII (1936), 417-43; Robert H. Fife, "The Renaissance in a Changing World," *GR*, IX (1934), 73-95; E. F. Jacob, "Changing Views of the Renaissance," *History*, XVI (1931), 214-29; E. F. Jacob, "The Fifteenth Century: Some Recent Interpretations," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, XIV (1930), 386-409; and A. S. Turberville, "Changing Views of the Renaissance," *History*, XVI (1932), 289-97. A judicious interpretation of Burckhardt's role in the history of the idea of the Renaissance is made by Professor Ferguson in "Jakob Burckhardt's Interpretation of the Renaissance," in the January, 1943 issue of *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America*. The central problem in Burckhardt's thesis is clearly dealt with in Professor Nelson's "Individualism as a Criterion of the Renaissance," *JEGP*, XXXII (1933), 316-34. See also footnote 7.

the story somewhat I have confined the study to English materials.

## II. The Renaissance Origins of the Relationship

What was the relation of the revival of learning to the reformation of religion? Were these two contemporary movements independent of each other, or did one lead to the other, and if so, which and why? Was the revival inimical to the changes which were shaking the old religion to its foundation or was it that the Reformation threatened the very existence of the new learning? These were some of the questions which the men of the Renaissance asked themselves about the two movements which as it seemed to them were so profoundly affecting the world. The point to stress is not that these questions remained unanswered, or rather received contradictory answers, but that they were raised at all, for to have raised them shows a very heightened awareness of contemporary ideological tendencies. In fact, it was over these very problems that Erasmus was led to break with Luther.

To understand Erasmus' attitude toward the Reformation it is necessary to discover what his objectives were. His aim was not revolution, but reform, and in point of fact, he wished to go back to the more simple and less sophisticated forms of the Christian faith. As early as 1499, he pays his respects to Colet for his efforts in restoring to its pristine brightness and dignity the old and true theology which has been obscured by the subtleties of the scholastics. As Colet himself said, the way to reform the Church is not to enact new laws but to go back to the teachings of Christ and honestly to observe the laws which already exist; in short, the trouble with Christianity is that it has never been tried. To Erasmus Christianity was not a matter of theological disputation but a sincere profession of faith and the less argument over subtle points of doctrine the better for true religion. And he thought that reforms could be brought about within the Church; he came not to destroy the schoolmen but to reform them.<sup>2</sup> He looked on the new learning as a means of helping bring about this reformation.<sup>3</sup> His scholarly efforts

<sup>2</sup> Erasmus to Wolfgang Capito, Feb. 26, 1517, cited in Robert H. Murray, *Erasmus and Luther: Their Attitude to Toleration* (London, 1920), 27, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Johan Huizinga, *Erasmus*, tr. F. Hopman (New York, 1924), 216. Cf. No. 563B to Cardinal Wolsey, 1518, in Francis M. Nichols, tr., *The Epistles of Erasmus* (London, 1901-18), III, 383.

are directed toward clearing the texts of the seminal works of Christian thought from their accumulated dross of commentary and exegesis so that the reader can see for himself what was meant.

Now, Luther had the same attitude toward the new learning as did Erasmus; it was to be used to restore the Christian religion to its primitive purity.<sup>4</sup> But if Erasmus and Luther each held the same opinions as to the proper use of the new learning in the reformation of religion, how does it happen that after 1518 Erasmus misses no opportunity to accuse the reformers of being enemies of learning and good letters? The quarrel ultimately goes back to the question of the proper tactics to use in effecting the reformation. As I have said, Erasmus thought the reformation could be brought about within the Church; he saw the problem as essentially a cleaning up process in which those who did not live up to the true faith would be eased out of positions of responsibility within the Church by the Reformers working either through their own offices or through the influence of men in high places who realized the necessity of bringing about the reforms and therefore cooperated with the Reformers. As a matter of fact, it was mainly toward this latter group that Erasmus seems to have devoted his greatest efforts, for he saw in them a sense of toleration and a love of letters which appealed to his own tastes. Any attack on the Church was therefore to him an attack on the men who sponsored the revival of learning and who exemplified its finest traits.

But the Reformers knew that it would be hopeless to expect any fundamental and far-reaching reforms from those in power within the Church, and they certainly did not trust those very men Erasmus appealed to, because they seemed to the Reformers to stand for those very pagan ideas Erasmus himself had castigated. In short, the struggle was the basic one of seizure of power and the Reformers held to the position that only a frontal attack on the Church could effect the desired reforms; this fundamental problem is thoroughly analysed in Calvin's *The Necessity of Reforming the Church: Presented to the Imperial Diet at Spire, A.D. 1544*, in which the conclusion is reached that the ruling clique cannot be expected to give up its power of its own will and that only a struggle for control will lead to the de-

<sup>4</sup> Martin Luther in Frederick Eby, ed., *Early Protestant Educators* (New York, 1931), 59, 61-62.

sired results. Now, it is exactly this idea of struggle which Erasmus could not tolerate, so that when finally the issue was presented to him sharply and clearly, to attack the Church on all fronts or to accept it as it was, he chose the latter. Thinking to remain aloof from the struggle, he found himself on the side of those whose policies he opposed.

As he attempts to extricate himself from the dilemma and finds that he cannot, he increasingly places the blame for his uncomfortable position on the Reformers who, if they had not forced the issue, would not have caused him his ideological difficulties. So he turns on those who would put his own ideas to the test of action and accuses them of subverting letters.<sup>5</sup> Luther, Erasmus accuses, has engaged in hostile and seditious actions, he will not rest until he has destroyed the study of languages and good learning, he has thrown the apple of discord into the world: "*Vbicunque regnat Luteranismus, ibi litterarum est interitus; et tamen hoc genus hominum maxime litteris alitur.*"<sup>6</sup>

As we have seen, the split between Erasmus and Luther came over the problem of the extent of the politicalization of the new learning. In line with the main tradition of the Italian humanists, Erasmus insisted that the study of good letters was ultimately a value in itself, though, like Valla, who received his approval, it could be used to clear away errors and confusion. On the other hand, Luther, and with him Calvin and Melancthon, both humanists of repute it should be remembered, thought that the full implications of the new learning should be carried out even if it meant the destruction of the Church as an institution. Erasmus saw the problem as an intellectual one in which all that was needed was the rectification of error; Luther saw the Church as an institution whose basic strength was in the ideological sphere as well as in its social, political, and economic ramifications and which therefore had to be attacked all along the line. From Erasmus' point of view, it was the intransigent attitude of the radicals which caused the tragedy as he called it; according to Luther, it was the intransigence of the conservatives who would not suffer any changes to be made in the *status*

5 Erasmus No. 1033, to Albert of Brandenburg, October 19, 1519, in P.S. and H.M. Allen, ed., *Opus Epistolarum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906-28), IV, 104-05. It should be noted that Erasmus' attitude toward Reuchlin is variable; sometimes he links him with Luther, sometimes he berates Luther to him.

6 Erasmus No. 1977, to Willibald Pirckheimer, March 20, 1528, in P.S. and H.M. Allen, *op. cit.*, VII, 366. Cf. No. 1155, to Reuchlin, November 8, 1520, IV, 372; No. 1167, to Lorenzo Campegio, December 6, 1520, IV, 402.

quo, lest one change bring in its wake a complete reformation which forced the Reformers to break with the Church.<sup>7</sup>

### III. To the Mid-Eighteenth Century

The problem of the relationship of the Renaissance and Reformation continued to agitate the writers of the period between 1605 and 1742. However, though the problem was recognized, it was not debated with any great acumen, the reason being, I should like to suggest, the philosophical nature of the question which the seventeenth and early eighteenth century historians had not the technique to grasp. With the development of a more philosophical history in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the problem was raised more sharply and received more serious and acute treatment.

According to Sir Robert Naunton, it was the revival of letters and not the Reformation, which brought about the destruction of "the Romane ignorance."<sup>8</sup> More considered is the account given by Samuel Parker:

Must we now, after all these and many more Discoveries about natural Bodies, confine ourselves to what we find in *Aristotle*, who never dream'd of any such things? Is it possible that so many new Appearances should not alter the Frame of Philosophy, nay rather hazard the pulling down of the old ruinous House that had too narrow Foundations, that it may be built again with more Magnificence? . . . . Why then must Philosophy alone be bound up still in its Infant Swadling-Bands? And there being the same reason, why should we not allow the same liberty of expatiating? . . .

But me thinks I hear some Men say, All Innovations are dangerous; Philosophy and Divinity are so interwoven by the Schoolmen, that it cannot be safe to separate them; New Philosophy will bring in new Divinity, and Freedom in the one will make Men desire a Liberty in the other . . . .

<sup>7</sup> See Hans Baron, "Zur Frage des Ursprungs des deutschen Humanismus und seiner Religiösen Reformbestrebungen: Ein Kritischer Bericht über die Neuere Literatur," *HZ*, CXXXII (1925), 413-46; Robert H. Fife, "Humanistic Currents in the Reformation Era," *GR*, XII (1937), 75-94; J. Haller, "Humanismus und Reformation," *ZfK*, XLII (1923), 328-31, XLIII, (1924), 169-73; Hajo Holborn, *Ulrich Von Hutten and the German Reformation*, tr. Roland H. Bainton, Yale University Press, 1937; Paul Joachimsen, "Renaissance, Humanismus, und Reformation," *Zeitwende*, I (1925), 402-25; Paul Joachimsen, "Vom Mittelalter zur Reformation," *HV*, XX (1920), 426-70; Paul Kalkoff, "Die Stellung der deutschen Humanisten zur Reformation," *ZK*, XLVI (1928), 161-231; Hans Rupprich, "Deutsche Literatur Zeitalter des Humanismus und Reformation: Ein Bericht," *DVLG*, XVII (1939), 83-133; Fritz Strich, "Renaissance und Reformation," *DVLG*, I (1923), 582-612; Ernst Troeltsch, "Renaissance und Reformation," *HZ*, CX (1913), 518-56.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Robert Naunton, *Fragmenta Regalia*, ed. Edward Arber (London, 1870), 15.



Learning and Knowledg will break forth like Fire, and pierce like Lightning thro all Impediments; Politeness and Elegancy hath long ago subdued Monastick Barbarism. *Erasmus* and *Melancthon*, with the rest of those Restorers of Learning, have made *Holcot* and *Bricot* quite out of fashion: and the inquisitive Genius of latter years, like a mighty Wind, hath brush'd down all the Schoolmens Cobwebs. There is an infinite Desire of Knowledg broken forth in the World; and Men may as well hope to stop the Tide, or bind the Ocean with Chains, as hinder free Philosophy from overflowing:<sup>9</sup>

The Reformers, by breaking the bonds of monkish ignorance, made freedom of inquiry possible and consequently facilitated the advance of the new philosophy. This idea is shared by Thomas Sprat who says that the Reformation "... put Men upon a stricter Inquiry into the Truth of things" and by Thomas Burnet who goes on to fuse together a number of separate concepts: in order to break the bonds of papal tyranny, the pre-reformers had to go the scriptures, but before they could do that, they had to have learning; thus, there is a mutual dependence between the Reformation and the Renaissance.<sup>10</sup> And John Edwards writes that "... we, by the Divine Blessing, are free'd from that Ignorance and Bondage; which we owe to the *Reformation*, whereby that Darkness was dispell'd, and that Vassalage removed. And now we are no longer tied up in the dark, we both see and walk, and we daily make progress in Divine Learning."<sup>11</sup> In his *Life of Dr. John Colet*, Samuel Knight makes the point that no period in English history is so little known as the fifty years preceding the Reformation, in which time both true religion and useful learning dawned upon the world through the efforts of such religious humanists as Erasmus and Colet; and in his *Life of Erasmus*, Knight makes the same point in regard to Erasmus.<sup>12</sup>

Now, in the work of the writers just considered, there is a common idea, namely, that the Reformation established a liberty of thought which enabled men to destroy ignorance and to establish a freer mode of life. But when we place the following passage from Anthony Collins side by side with the others, es-

9 Samuel Parker, *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men: together with Some Reflections upon the New Philosophy in The Phenix* (London, 1728), II, 515-16.

10 Thomas Burnet, *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, (London, 1816), 601-02.

11 John Edwards, *A Compleat History of All the Dispensations and Methods of Religion* (London, 1689), II, 636.

12 Samuel Knight, *The Life of Dr. John Colet* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1823), p. xii; *The Life of Erasmus* (Cambridge, 1726), xix.



pecially those by Parker and Burnet, we find a similarity of idea but applied to different objects:

Thus before the Restoration of Learning, when Men were subject to the Impositions of Priests, a prodigious Ignorance prevail'd. And when they began to think, their first Notions were rude and imperfect, and Time and Pains were necessary to bring them to that degree of Justness they are at present.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, we see begun a process which gains in increasing complexity and confusion, namely, the attribution of similar effects to different causes, and conversely, the attribution of similar causes to different effects. For example, a large group of scholars thought that printing had brought about the revival of learning but another group thought that printing had been instrumental in effecting the Reformation. John Edwards writes:

The *Seasonableness* of this Nobel Invention may be discovered from this, That it was so unspeakably Serviceable to the bringing on the *Reformation*: For by the Benefit of *Printing* the World was blessed with the excellent Labours of Learned and Pious Men who lived in that Time; and thus by this means the Popish Ignorance was laid open, the Errors and Impieties of the church of *Rome* were expos'd to view, and whereas before learning was lock'd up in Cloysters, now it spread it self over all Europe, and the Truth of the Gospel was Propagated almost to a Miracle.<sup>14</sup>

Francis Burges, who had attributed the revival of learning to printing, likewise attributes the Reformation to it.<sup>15</sup> The same language which is used to describe the effects produced by the revival of learning is used to describe the effects of the Reformation. While it is true that these examples of confusion are somewhat simple, they develop increasingly involved and perplexing forms as historical method becomes more scientific and at the same time more philosophical.

It should be pointed out that while it might be expected that the Reformation would, of all the movements connected with the Renaissance, escape detraction, it too had its critics. In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon terms the three distempers of learning, fantastical, contentious, and delicate. Referring to the last of these, or vain affectations, Bacon says:

Martin Luther, conducted (no doubt) by an higher Providence, but in discourse of reason finding what a province he had undertaken against the

13 Anthony Collins, *A Discourse of Free-Thinking* (London, 1713), 7-8.

14 John Edwards, *op. cit.*, II, 625-26.

15 Francis Burges, "Some Observations on the Use and Origins of the Noble Art and Mystery of Printing," *Harleian Miscellany* (London, 1745), III, 149.

Bishop of Rome and the degenerate traditions of the church, and finding his own solitude, being no ways aided by the opinions of his own time, was enforced to awake all antiquity, and to call former times to his succors to make a party against the present time; so that the ancient authors, both in divinity and in humanity, which had long time slept in libraries, began generally to be read and revolved. . . . And again, because the great labour then was with the people, (of whom the Pharisees were wont to say, *Ex-ecrabilis ista turba, quae non novit legem*,) for the winning and persuading of them, there grew of necessity in chief price and request eloquence and variety of discourse, as the fittest and forciblest access into the capacity of the vulgar sort. So that these four causes concurring, the admiration of ancient authors, the hate of the schoolmen, the exact study of languages, and the efficacy of preaching, did bring in an affectionate study of eloquence and copie of speech, which then began to flourish. This grew speedily to an excess; for men began to hunt more after words than matter; and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment.<sup>14</sup>

Both the revival of learning and the Reformation are criticized by Bacon, but especially the latter for having introduced the need for the former. Though the charge is not made explicit, Bacon, later followed by Burnett who had probably read his Bacon well, accuses the learning of the Renaissance of being *belles-lettristic*, not solid, and, by extension, unscientific. Another type of criticism is made by Sir John Denham:

Then Darkness, *Europe's* face did over-spread  
 From lazy Cells, where superstition bred,  
 Which, link'd with blind Obedience, so encreast  
 That the whole world, same ages they opprest;  
 Till through those Clouds, the Sun of Knowledg brake,  
 And *Europe* from her Lethargy did wake:  
 Then, first our Monarchs were acknowledg'd here  
 That they, their Churches Nursing-Fathers were.  
 When *Lucifer* no longer could advance  
 His works on the false ground of Ignorance,  
 New Arts he tries, and new designs he laies,  
 Then, his well-study'd Master-piece he plays;  
*Loyola, Luther, Calvin* he inspires  
 And kindles, with infernal Flames, their fires,  
 Sends their fore-runner (conscious of th' event)  
 Printing, his most pernicious Instrument:

16 Francis Bacon, *Of the Profciencie and Advancement of Learning*, in James Spedding, Robert L. Ellis, and Douglas D. Heath, ed., *The Works* (New York, 1869), VI, 118-19.

Wild Controversie then, which long had slept,  
Into the Press from ruin'd Cloysters leapt:  
No longer by Implicite faith we erre  
Whilst every Man's his own Interpreter; . . .<sup>17</sup>

But the very freedom of thought which Denham thought so reprehensible, the Duke of Buckingham thought the Reformation had betrayed:

But when the reformers had cast off the unsufferable bondage of Rome, and rescued the gospel from the impositions and impostures of that church, one would have imagined they should have cast away that odious maxim of confining, and imposing on the consciences of those they had set free; and never have dreamed of persecuting them for making use of that liberty they had pretended to establish, by requiring an implicit faith in them and their doctrines, when they would not allow it to those of the church they had forsaken for her errors and tyranny. For to me it is very unaccountable, that they should pretend to tell us, that we should now freely consult the word of God, and, at the same time, deny us to understand it for ourselves; since that is but to fool us with the name of liberty, without letting us possess the thing, and we might as well have continued under our old masters, as be slaves to new lords. And this I believe has stopped the progress of the reformation.<sup>18</sup>

Buckingham's daring statement presages a more scientific attitude toward the Reformation than his contemporaries were capable of adopting, but it required more than a century of scholarship before a saner attitude toward the Reformation could be taken by English Protestant historians, and even the nineteenth century historians could not free themselves of their bias in favor of the English Reformation.

#### IV. The Second Half of the Eighteenth Century

The writers of the latter half of the eighteenth century asked a number of interesting questions about the relationship of the Renaissance to the Reformation. Did the same causes which produced one movement produce the other? Did the Renaissance result in the Reformation or was the process the other way about? Was the Reformation of benefit or a hindrance to the Renaissance? Conversely, was the spirit of the Renaissance inimical to that of the Reformation? Finally, did both movements yield similar results, and were these results compatible

<sup>17</sup> Sir John Denham, "The Progress of Learning," *The Poetical Works*, ed. Theodore H. Banks, Jr. (Yale University Press, 1928), 118.

<sup>18</sup> George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, "Letter II. To Mr. Clifford, on His Human Reason," *The Works*, ed. T. Evans (London, 1775), II, 207-08.

with, or antagonistic to, each other? Of course, not all of these questions received equal attention, but it is significant that they were raised at all and they indicate a growing appreciation of the complexity of historical research.

It is remarkable that of the writers who consider the problem of the causes of the Reformation all are agreed that the spirit of active and free inquiry resulted in a zeal for truth which ultimately led to the Reformation, but whence this spirit of inquiry is derived is not shown; here again is an instance of the tendency to ascribe abstract causes to historical phenomena. A typical expression of the view just stated is that by John Gregory:

Yet the effects of religious controversy have sometimes proved beneficial to Mankind. That spirit of free enquiry, which incited the first Reformers to shake off the yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny, naturally begot just sentiments of civil liberty, especially when irritated by persecution. When such sentiments came to be united with that bold enthusiasm, that severity of temper and manners that distinguished some of the Reformed Sects; they produced those resolute and inflexible Men, who alone were able to assert the cause of liberty, in an age when the Christian world was enervated by luxury or superstition; and to such Men we owe that freedom, and happy constitution, which we at present enjoy.<sup>19</sup>

Now, since it was the spirit of free inquiry which led to the Reformation, what was the material manifestation of this spirit, through what agency did it express itself? The answer was unanimous: it was the invention of printing which made possible the spread of useful knowledge which ultimately made the power of the church crumble. So great were the services rendered by printing that at the meeting of the Friends to the Freedom of the Press on June 15, 1793, an ode by Armstrong to it was recited.<sup>20</sup> Armstrong's poem makes the Renaissance and Reformation the joint products of a similar cause, while both have an identical historical mission. Vicesimus Knox has an essay "On the Moral, Political, and Religious Effects of Printing" in which he lists nine effects produced by the invention of printing. These are a change in the manners and sentiments of the people, the diffusion of philosophy through all the ranks of society, the cir-

19 John Gregory, *A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with those of the Animal World* (London, 1777), 265-66. Cf. Richard Mant, "On Commerce," *Oxford Prize Essays* (Oxford, 1836), II, 53-54; Henry James Pye *Poems on Various Subjects* (London, 1787), II, 142-43.

20 "Ode for the Meeting of the Friends to the Freedom of the Press. At Lodon the 15th of June, 1793. By Mr. Armstrong," in Archibald Bruce, *Reflections on Freedom of Writing; and the Impropriety of Attempting to Suppress it by Penal Laws* (Edinburgh, 1794), 166-67.

culatation of pamphlets on all subjects to all classes, the refinement of the lower classes through an increase in learning, the exhibition of virtue as well as vice, the spread of truth but of error too, the development of the idea of improvement, the growth of the idea of superiority, and the increase of science.<sup>21</sup> In this interesting essay, Knox has linked the theory of democracy, the revival of learning, and the Reformation to the invention of printing and at the same time made them all parts of a sweeping movement which effected the change from the old world of the Middle Ages to the new world of the modern era.<sup>22</sup> The beneficial results which were attributed to printing by Anderson and Knox were ascribed to the liberty of the press by Archibald Bruce.<sup>23</sup>

To adduce examples of the belief that the Reformation broke the popish hold on the minds of men would be a work of supererogation. The Protestant anti-Catholic bias of the English writers of the latter half of the eighteenth century could see no good in an era which was dominated by Catholic ideology, and as a consequence saw in the Reformation not only an attack on the ecclesiastical prerogatives of the Catholic church, but also the first beginnings of the emancipation of the human mind and the establishment of the free exercise of reason. "As monkery increased," writes John Stedman:

taste and sound philosophy declined. The schools and the convents in which any vestige of literature was to be found, adopted the systems which they deemed the best suited to support the doctrines of Christianity. Some of them making selections from the different systems of Greece, and frequently interlarding these with their own opinions, framed systems unheard of before, and calculated rather to perplex than to enlighten the mind. In the sixteenth century, when several states of Europe had shaken off the papal yoke, men's minds, feeling the sweets of relaxation, after so long and so heavy a bondage, learned to think with more liberality, and to disclose new opinions with less reserve. While the sciences were cherished, and a freedom of inquiry began to obtain in the reformed states, Galileo was persecuted in Italy for physical discoveries and doctrines which are, at this day, universally recognized as certain truths: And Copernicus, in an earlier period, would have shared the same fate, had not a natural death prevented his persecution, when he had just seen the first impression of his works.<sup>24</sup>

21 Vicesimus Knox, *The Works* (London, 1824), II, 80-86.

22 Cf. Robert Henry, *The History of Great Britain* (London, 1805), X, 200; William Roscoe, *The Life of Lorenzo De' Medici* (London, 1825), I, 43-45; John Stedman, *Laelius and Hortensia* (Edinburgh, 1782), 450-51. Oliver Goldsmith expresses a somewhat similar notion in his *History of England from the Earliest Times to the Death of George II* (London, 1797), II, 146.

23 Archibald Bruce, *Reflection on Freedom of Writing* (Edinburgh, 1794), 13.

24 John Stedman, *op. cit.*, 393-94.



A letter addressed to Junius which appeared in the *Public Advertiser* dated October 8, 1771, signed "An Advocate in the Cause of the People," links the Reformation to the liberal philosophy.<sup>25</sup> And by a simple process of extension the Reformation was held responsible not only for the destruction of the Roman church but generally for having set the light of reason ablaze, for freeing the human mind, and for producing a spirit of inquiry.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the same results were attributed to the Reformation as were ascribed to the revival of learning.

From the theory that the Reformation made possible the spirit of free inquiry, it is an easy step to assert that the atmosphere of liberty of thought and expression made possible by the Reformation ultimately led to the Renaissance. Praising the writers who flourished under Elizabeth, George Ellis asserts that the "... literary splendour of this reign may be justly attributed to the effects of the Reformation."<sup>27</sup> Burney holds that had it not been for the Reformation and the invention of printing the art of music would have remained the monopoly of the church, while Goldsmith suggests that it was the Reformation which created the taste for literature which led to the great works of the Renaissance.<sup>28</sup> The intimate relationship between the Renaissance and Reformation is described by Samuel Johnson in his *Life of Ascham*.<sup>29</sup> Alves points out that both Melancthon and Erasmus were students of the great works of the ancients and Reformers as well and shows that the skill in editing which had been developed as a results of the revival of ancient texts was applied to the holy books.<sup>30</sup> Finally, it was recognized at this time that Erasmus epitomized in his life and works the totality of Renaissance-Reformation relationships. Two attitudes towards Erasmus have always seemed to prevail; one, cynical and realistic, emphasizes Erasmus' refusal to follow out in action the logic of his thinking, while the other tends to skim over his hesitations but concentrates on his services to learning and the goodness of

25 C. W. Everett, ed. *The Letters of Junius* (London, 1927), 370.

26 David Mallet, *The Works* (London, 1759), III, 241; William Robertson, *The Work*, ed. Dugald Stewart (London, 1827), IV, 12; N. William Wraxall, *The History of France* (London, 1814), I, 479, II, 189.

27 George Ellis, ed., *Specimens of the Early English Poets* (London, 1811), II, 158.

28 Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, ed. Frank Mercer (New York, 1935), I, 704; Oliver Goldsmith, *The Works*, ed. J. W. M. Gibbs (London, 1885), V, 308.

29 Samuel Johnson, *The Life of Roger Ascham in Miscellaneous and Fugitive Pieces*, (London, 1774), I, 235.

30 Robert Alves, *Sketches of a History of Literature*, (Edinburgh, 1794), 106-07.



his character. The first is held by James Murray who in a terse sentence sums up his point of view: "Erasmus, before Luther appeared, had exposed the absurdities of the Church of Rome, though he either had not sufficient courage, or never intended to go so far as Luther did."<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, the more sympathetic attitude towards Erasmus is expressed by Knox in a very warm appreciation of the humanist.<sup>32</sup>

The writers who have been considered up to this point have been favorably impressed by the Reformation's services in promoting or creating an atmosphere advantageous for the production of good studies and literature. On the other hand, there was an equally respectable group of writers who thought that the Reformation was prejudicial to the Renaissance. Warton carefully traces the progress of learning in England and comes to the conclusion that the Reformation hindered the study of humane letters by destroying the monasteries, by embroiling the minds of men in religious disputes, and by turning attention away from learning to the securing of wealth by plundering the monasteries.<sup>33</sup> In the first part of *The Age of Reason*, "Christianity and Education, in the Light of History," Paine first praises the Reformation but immediately reverses his judgment.<sup>34</sup> But the most outspoken opponent of the Reformation was Hume. Writing of the Lutherans, he says:

The quick and surprising progress of this bold sect may justly in part be ascribed to the late invention of printing, and revival of learning: Not that reason bore any considerable share, in opening men's eyes with regard to the impostures of the Romish church: For of all branches of literature, philosophy had, as yet, and till long afterwards, made the most inconsiderable progress; neither is there any instance where argument has been able to free the people from that enormous load of absurdity, with which superstition has everywhere overwhelmed them: Not to mention, that the rapid advance of the Lutheran doctrine, and the violence, with which it was embraced, prove sufficiently, that it owed not its success to reason and reflection. The art of printing and the revival of learning forwarded its progress in another manner. By means of that art, the books of

31 James Murray, *A History of the Churches in England and Scotland, from the Reformation to this Present Time* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1771), I, 3.

32 Vicesimus Knox, *The Works*, V, 407-09.

33 Thomas Warton, *The Life of Sir Thomas Pope* (London, 1780), 153-54. Cf. James Barry, *The Works* (London, 1809), II, 210-14; Thomas Warton, *The History of English Poetry* (London, 1840), III, 7-8.

34 Thomas Paine, *The Works*, ed. M. Van der Weyde (New Rochelle, 1925), VIII, 66-67.

Luther and his sectaries, full of vehemence, declamation and a rude eloquence, were propagated more quickly, and in greater numbers.<sup>35</sup>

The body of opinion on the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation as developed between 1742 and 1795 represents a considerable advance over the previous period covered. Not only are more facets of the relationship treated at this time, but they are given more mature and sophisticated handling. Once more there is evidence that the complexity of history is increasingly being recognized, while at the same time attempts are being made to develop new methods to meet the problems being raised. The crucial questions connected with the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation were asked at this time in a form which later scholarship accepted while the answers given found many followers in later years.

#### V. The Early Nineteenth Century

One of the strongest elements in the idea of the Renaissance at this time was the investigation of the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation. Considerable effort was expended on this aspect of the Renaissance problem and the results seem to justify the labor spent. The first problem connected with the study of the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation was the determination of the general effects produced by the Reformation. On this point, Roscoe has some important things to say:

The effects produced by the reformation on the political and moral state of Europe, are of a much more important nature. The destruction of the authority of the Romish see, throughout many flourishing, and many rising nations, whilst it freed the monarch from the imperious interposition of an arrogant pontiff, released the people from that oppressive and undefined obedience to a foreign power, which exhausted their wealth, impeded their enjoyments, and interfered in all their domestic concerns. The abolition of the odious and absurd institutions of monastic life, by which great numbers of persons were restored to the common purposes of society, infused fresh vigour into those states which embraced the opinions of the reformers; and the restoration of the ancient and apostolic usage of the Christian church, in allowing the priesthood to marry, was a circumstance of the utmost advantage to the morals and manners of the age. To

<sup>35</sup> David Hume, *The History of England, from the Invasion of Julius Caesar, to the Revolution in 1688* (London, 1770), IV, 41-42. Of course, Hume's cynical attitude did not long go unchallenged. In his *Observations on Mr. Hume's History of England in Tracts on Political and other Subjects* (London, 1796), I, 323-25, 328, Joseph Towers replies point by point to Hume's criticisms.

this may be added the destruction of many barbarous, absurd, and superstitious dogmas, by which the people were induced to believe that crimes could be commuted for money, and dispensations purchased even for the premeditated commission of sins.

But perhaps the most important advantage derived from the reformation, is to be found in the great example of freedom of inquiry, which was thus exhibited to the world, and which has produced an incalculable effect on the state and condition of mankind. That liberty of opinion which was at first exercised only on religious subjects, was, by a natural and unavoidable progress, soon extended to those of a political nature. Throughout many of the kingdoms of Europe, civil and religious liberty closely accompanied each other; and its inhabitants, in adopting those measures which seemed to them necessary to secure their eternal happiness, have at least obtained those temporal advantages, which, in many instances, have amply repaid them for their sacrifices and their labours.<sup>36</sup>

Allaston Burgh likewise thought that the Reformation led to freedom of the mind, while Hazlitt in his very sympathetic *Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft* points out that the belief in the progress of truth and its power to crush error had steadily gained ground in England since the Reformation.<sup>37</sup> Another contribution made by the Reformation is that it dethroned the scholastic authority and the infallibility of Aristotle: this is the opinion of Thomas Campbell in his *Essay On English Poetry*. In connection with the Reformation, the important part played by Wyclif, "the Father of the Reformation," is pointed out in an anonymous life of him.<sup>38</sup> Having subjected scholasticism to a severe semantic analysis by pointing out the error involved in thinking that the term aureity, for example, explained the properties of gold, Coleridge states in his "Hints towards the Formation of a More Comprehensive Theory of Life" that

... so it continued, even to the time that the Reformation sounded the second trumpet, and the authority of the schools sank with that of the hierarchy, under the intellectual courage and activity which this great revolu-

36 William Roscoe, *The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth* (Liverpool, 1805), IV, 58-59. In all fairness to Roscoe's liberalism, it ought to be added that he continues this passage with the statement that the Reformation resulted in conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, and between the Protestant sects. The consequence was the spread of persecution, intolerance, and bigotry: "... the human mind, a slave in all ages, has rather changed its master, than freed itself from its servitude." This is Roscoe's final judgment on the Reformation.

37 Allaston Burgh, *Anecdotes of Music* (London, 1814), I, 319; William Hazlitt, *The Complete Works*, ed. P. P. Howe (London, 1930-34), III, 132-33. In his *Life of Napoleon*, Hazlitt terms the Reformation "... the great event in modern times" because it brought arbitrary power, both secular and spiritual, to the test of reason and conscience.

38 *The Life of John Wickliff* (Edinburgh, 1826), 3-4. Cf. Robert Southey, "Chalmer's English Poets," *Quarterly Review*, XII (1814), 65.

tion had inspired. Power, once awakened, cannot rest in one subject. All the sciences partook of the new influences. The world of experimental philosophy was soon mapped out for posterity by the comprehensive and enterprising genius of Bacon, and the laws explained by which experiment could be dignified into experience.<sup>39</sup>

Macaulay expresses substantially the same idea in his essay on Lord Bacon," for there he writes that ". . . it is chiefly to the great reformation of religion that we owe the great reformation of philosophy."<sup>40</sup> In summary, then, the Reformation resulted in the establishment of freedom of inquiry generally and in the rise of science specifically; what relationship these movements had to the Renaissance will now be considered.

Although the bulk of opinion held that either the Reformation had aided the revival of learning or the revival of learning the Reformation, there were some writers who saw a reciprocal advantage to each. For instance, Henry Kett writes that ". . . it is very remarkable that the reformation of religion, and the revival of classical learning, were reciprocally advantageous; they reflected mutual light and afforded mutual assistance."<sup>41</sup> Burnett asserts that the Reformation and the revival of letters had an identical aim, to shake and enliven the wits of men and the result was the rise of science. A few writers pointed out that often the reformers were humanists as well. "Who were the first English reformers," asks Thomas Morell:

but the individuals who contributed more than any other to the revival of letters in their day? What were the causes which co-operated to produce the reformation of religion, but those which also concurred to revive literature and extend science?<sup>42</sup>

While most writers argued that the revival of learning was indebted to the Reformation, a considerable number asserted that it was the revival of learning which produced the conditions

39 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Complete Works*, ed. Professor Shedd (New York, 1853), I, 379-80. The passage just quoted is amplified in an article which appeared in *Fraser's* titled "Monologues of the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Esq. No. II. The Science and System of Logic," *Fraser's* XII (1835), 624, to read after the phrase "So it continued" as follows: "with slight and ineffectual opposition, even after the era considered as the new dawn or restoration of literature, coincident with the final extinction of the Greek empire and the arrival of the learned fugitives in Italy—even to the time" etc.; Professor Shedd does not mention this addition.

40 Thomas B. Macaulay, *Critical, Historical, and Miscellaneous Essays and Poems* (New York, 1879?), II, 220. Cf. Isaac Disraeli's essay on "Bacon," *Curiosities of Literature*, ed. Benjamin Disraeli (Boston, 1861) II, 285-86.

41 Henry Kett, *Elements of General Knowledge* (Baltimore, 1812), I, 253.

42 Thomas Morell, *Studies in History* (London, 1822), I, 452.

which ultimately made the Reformation possible.<sup>43</sup> Roscoe states that one of the reasons for Luther's success is the fact that he was a man of considerable learning who had the foresight to link his cause with that of the advancement of learning and in that way secured the assistance of the most eminent scholars of his time. Stewart holds that Erasmus did more to advance the progress of the Reformation among men of education and taste than did Luther, while the Reformation as a whole "... was itself one of the natural consequences of the revival of letters."<sup>44</sup> Thomas McCrie is even more specific and certain:

Ancient literature was now cultivated with the greatest enthusiasm; it spread with amazing rapidity through Italy, and, surmounting the Alps, reached, within a short period, the northern extremities of Europe. . . . The rise of the papal monarchy, and the corruption of Christianity, may be traced in a great measure to the ignorance and barbarism which fell on western Europe, and increased during the middle ages. The revival of letters, by banishing the darkness, broke the spell on which the empire of superstition rested, and opened the eyes of mankind on the chains with which their credulity had suffered their spiritual rulers to load them.<sup>45</sup>

Turner's estimate of Erasmus' position serves to show that Erasmus was still considered to be a key figure both in the revival of literature and the Reformation.<sup>46</sup>

However, most writers were agreed that the Reformation was a necessary condition for the revival of learning. Roscoe puts the nature of the relationship this way:

As the progress of literature had concurred with other causes in giving rise to the reformation; so that great event produced in its turn a striking effect on the studies and the taste of Europe. . . . The ancient authors began not only to be studied for the charms of their composition, but were called in as auxiliaries by the contending parties, who by affecting an intimate acquaintance with the writers of antiquity, supposed that they gave additional credit to their own cause; and the period which immediately succeeded the reformation, was that in which Europe saw the luminary of classical learning at a higher meridian than at any time either before or since.<sup>47</sup>

43 William Rosecoe, *op. cit.*, III, 139-40.

44 Dugald Stewart, *The Collected Works*, ed. Sir William Hamilton (Edinburgh, 1854, I, 27, footnote 2; 28.

45 Thomas McCrie, *History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the Sixteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1842), 15-16. Cf. Edward Nares, *Memoirs of the Life . . . of . . . Lord Burghley* (London, 1828-31), I, 25 where the revival of learning is called "... an extraordinary stimulus given to the minds of men, to awaken them effectually from the deep sleep, the superstitious apathy, into which they had fallen."

46 Sharon Turner, *The History of England* (London, 1839), XI, 106.

47 William Rosecoe, *Leo the Tenth*, IV, 52-53.



In the lectures for 1813-14, Coleridge writes:

The Reformation sounded through Europe like a trumpet; from the king to the peasant there was an enthusiasm for knowledge; the discovery of a MS. was the subject of an embassy.<sup>48</sup>

A very interesting analysis of the effects of the Reformation on the literature of the Renaissance is made by Charles W. Dilke in the introduction to his edition of *Old English Plays*.<sup>49</sup> Keats likewise believes in the intellectually beneficial effects of the Reformation which to him proves the "grand march of intellect."<sup>50</sup>

The introductory lecture of the *Lectures Chiefly on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* by Hazlitt contains a considered statement of the relationship between the Reformation and Renaissance literature:

The first cause I shall mention, as contributing to this general effect, was the Reformation, which had just then taken place. This event gave a mighty impulse and increased activity to thought and inquiry, and agitated the inert mass of accumulated prejudices throughout Europe. . . .

The translation of the Bible was the chief engine in the great work. It threw open, by a secret spring, the rich treasures of religion and morality, which had been there locked up as in a shrine. It revealed the visions of the prophets, and conveyed the lessons of inspired teachers (such they were thought) to the meanest of the people. It gave them a common interest in the common cause. Their hearts burnt within them as they read. It gave a *mind* to the people, by giving them common subjects of thought and feeling. It cemented their union of character and sentiment: it created endless diversity and collision of opinion. They found objects to employ their faculties, and a motive in the magnitude of the consequences attached to them to exert the utmost eagerness in the pursuit of truth, and the most daring intrepidity in maintaining it. Religious controversy sharpens the understanding by the subtlety and remoteness of the topics it discusses, and braces the will by their infinite importance. We perceive in the history of

48 *Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. Thomas M. Raysor (Harvard University Press, 1930), II, 261. In the third lecture of the 1811-12 series, Coleridge states that Shakespeare "... lived in an age in which from the religious controversies, carried on in a way of which we have no conception, there was a general energy of thinking, a pleasure in hard thinking"; the same idea is repeated in the sixth lecture of the same series.

49 Charles W. Dilke, ed. *Old English Plays* (London, 1814), I, xi-xii. Cf. George Ellis, *Specimens of the Early English Poets* (London, 1811), I, 158 where the literature of the Elizabethan era is characterized as follows: "The literary splendour of this reign may be justly attributed to the effects of the Reformation." However, Joseph Berington, *A Literary History of the Middle Ages* (London, 1814), 516-17, argues that while the cause of literature was benefited by the Reformation, it would have progressed without it and without strife.

50 John Keats, Letter 64, to John Hamilton Reynolds, May 3, 1818, *The Letters* ed. Maurice B. Forman (Oxford U. Press, 1935), I, 144-45.



this period a nervous masculine intellect. No levity, no feebleness, no indifference; or if there were, it is a relaxation from the intense activity which gives a tone to its general character. But there is a gravity approaching to piety; a seriousness of impression, a conscientious severity of argument, an habitual fervour and enthusiasm in their mode of handling almost every subject.<sup>51</sup>

True Christianity, as operating through Protestantism, contributed to Elizabethan literature the feelings of awe, admiration, sympathy, originality, tenderness, benevolence, humanity, and compassion; it provided romantic interest, a touching simplicity in the mode of narration, and, in the character of Christ, a figure of sublime humanity who taught love of the good for the sake of good; "the literature of this age then, I would say, was strongly influenced," concludes Hazlitt, "first by the spirit of Christianity, and secondly by the spirit of Protestantism." Hazlitt has just as enthusiastic but less high-flown praise of the services rendered literature by Protestantism in his essay "Old English Writers and Speakers" which appeared in *The Plain Speaker: Opinions on Books, Men, and Things* for 1826. He characterized the learning of the Reformation as ascetic and profound, weighted with thought, sincerity, integrity, and sanctity of purpose. "The seriousness, indeed, amounts to an air of devotion; and it has to me something fine, manly, and *old English* about it." Hazlitt is a notable instance of a writer who goes to a past age to look for those qualities which he finds lacking in his; he is using the Reformation in an hortatory sense.<sup>52</sup>

Despite the existence of such a sympathetic attitude towards the Reformation, there were a few writers who dared to dissent from the generally received opinion. This group held that the Reformation was prejudicial to the creation of art and literature. Roscoe says that the tendency of the Reformation was to deprive the artist of the benefits of association with religion, rewards on a lavish scale, a sympathetic audience, and a safe repository for his works.<sup>53</sup> Burnett makes a distinction between the effects produced by the Reformation on learning on the one

<sup>51</sup> William Hazlitt, *Lectures*, VI, 181-83.

<sup>52</sup> William Hazlitt, *The Plain Speaker*, XII, 314-16. Cf. Edward Nares, *Lord Burghley*, I, 30, Sir Walter Scott, *The History of Scotland* (London, 1830), II, 259; Alexander Bower, *The Life of Luther* (Philadelphia, 1824), 44; Robert Thomson, *Treatise on the Progress of Literature* (Edinburgh, 1834), 104-06; J. H. Hippisley, *Chapters on Early English Literature*, (London, 1837), 240-43.

<sup>53</sup> William Roscoe, *Leo the Tenth*, IV, 53-55.

hand and *belles lettres* on the other,<sup>54</sup> and in another place he mentions the bad effects of the dissolution of the monasteries; Southey makes the same point in his review of Disraeli's *Calamities of Authors* which appeared in the *Quarterly* for 1812. Leigh Hunt accuses the Reformation of having caused the English people to be less musical than they were before it while Allan Cunningham laments the destruction of the masterpieces of Italian art by the ignorant zeal of the Reformers.<sup>55</sup> In his rather sketchy *Historic Survey of German Poetry*, the Platonist William Taylor of Norwich argues that while the benefits of tolerance and of the liberty of the press, without which the creation of literature would be impossible, arose at the same time the Reformation did, they are independent of Protestantism and in fact the sceptical temper lay outside the stream of development of the Reformation. Taylor even goes so far as to say that had it not been for the German Reformation, as he calls it, Italy would have developed into a free country.<sup>56</sup>

While the study of the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation at this time adds nothing basically new to the ideas on the subject as developed in the latter part of the eighteenth century, it deepened and broadened the discussion and at the same time raised it to a higher literary level, thus pointing the way to the great histories of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Again, there is to be noted the tendency to merge the results of both the Renaissance and the Reformation, while both are held to be accountable for each other.

## VI. Conclusion

From Hallam on, the course of historical writing in general, and of the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation in particular, takes a different turn. Up to this point, historical writing on the subject under consideration is cumulative rather than philosophical. This is not to say that history up to this point is without its assumptions; it quite ob-

54 George Burnett, ed., *Specimens of English Prose Writers* (London, 1807), II, 3-6.

55 Leigh Hunt, "Notes," *Bacchus in Tuscany, a Dithyrambic Poem, from the Italian of Francesco Redi, with Notes Original and Select* (London, 1825), 161; Allan Cunningham, *The Lives of the most Eminent British Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (London, 1829), I, 19-20.

56 William Taylor, *Historic Survey of German Poetry* (London, 1830), I, 161-62. On the other hand, Thomas McCrie, *Reformation in Italy*, 18, states that the revival of learning resulted in the spread of scepticism to which the Reformation fortunately put a stop.

viously shows its various biases, but it is this very naivete of bias which sets apart the history written before the middle of the nineteenth century in England from that written later. After that time, history becomes more professionalized and specialized; it sets different goals for itself and looks to other methods to achieve them. The nature of the bias involved is less political than it is ideological and therefore more difficult to trace.

Nevertheless, it is useful to discover how the problem of the relationship between the Renaissance and the Reformation arose and developed, for the history of a subject conditions our understanding of it. The problem is of special interest to historians because its history shows what attempts have been made, first, to define the nature of a significant movement in human history in itself, and second, how it can be differentiated from other equally significant but different movements; in short, it epitomized the development of historical method. Most notable is the contemporary awareness of the Renaissance and the Reformation; the limits of later thinking on the subject are in fact marked by the men of the Renaissance and the Reformation themselves, a consideration which sheds a critical light on our own understanding of those periods, for we cannot be sure that we can ever escape the thinking of those who first originated the concepts with which we deal.

## AUGUSTINE'S USE OF SCRIPTURE

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Augustine<sup>1</sup> lived at a critical moment in western European history. On the last day of the year 406, many Vandals, Alani, Suevi crossed the Rhine and, having defeated the Franks, settled for a time in Gaul and finally reached the Pyrenees. Four years later Rome itself fell to Alaric and his Visigoths. In addition to these outward catastrophes, the church's inner life suffered from the assaults of heretic and schismatic. Arianism persisted in Gaul, Montanism and Manichaeism were rife in North Africa. Puritanic Donatism laid claim to being genuine Christianity, a claim which the doughty Bishop of Hippo could not countenance.

In a world in which the pillars of state were tottering and at a time when every pagan philosopher, every heretical Christian, every Christian schismatic laid claim to possession of truth, where was truth? Where certainty? Who possessed authority? By Augustine's day the Catholic church had already gone far toward perfecting the techniques by which she could ward off the assaults of her enemies and also conserve those values she esteemed highest. By means of the *regulae fidei*, or creeds, and the potent episcopate, the church had garrisoned itself against upstart detractors. There was another bulwark just being made ready in some final form: the holy writings.

Augustine's approach to the scriptures was gradual. At the time that he came across the *Hortensius* he turned to the Scriptures, only to turn away again, for in his estimation they could not compare with the writings of Cicero. Later at Milan following the advice of Ambrose he started to read Isaiah but found this too difficult and turned to the Psalms. The period of retirement and the months immediately following, which pro-

1 Literature on Augustine is voluminous. For this special topic one may consult: C. J. Costello, *St. Augustine's Doctrine on the Inspiration and Canonicity of Scripture* (Washington, 1930), F. C. Burkitt, *The Old Latin and the Itala*, in *Texts and Studies* (Cambridge, 1896), X, 3, and especially, Heinrich Joseph Vogels, "Die Heilige Schrift bei Augustinus," in the *Festschrift Aurelius Augustinus*, edited by Martin Grabmann and Joseph Mausbach (Köln, 1930). In quoting from Augustine's works, I have used, for convenience, the familiar translations of the *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*.

duced the philosophic treatises, were devoted to the classics rather than to the Bible. But increasingly Augustine studied and meditated upon the Scriptures, with the result that his writings are filled with Scriptural quotation and references. It has been estimated that two-thirds of the Biblical text could be assembled from his works.

The importance of Scripture for Augustine can hardly be exaggerated. But he was equally insistent upon rules of interpretation and to set forth these rules with clarity he wrote his treatise *On Christian Doctrine*. The ascent to Wisdom is by means of six preliminary steps or inner disciplines: fear of God, piety, knowledge, fortitude or resolution, sense of pity, and purification of heart; but it is the third step, knowledge, to which Augustine returns to explain the process of understanding Scripture.

Further, Augustine exerted great influence in helping to shape the canon of Scripture. The importance of his relationship to the matters of canon and text can hardly be exaggerated. He has his own list of worthy books<sup>2</sup> and the Council of Hippo (393) and the two at Carthage (397 and 419) further decreed that no other writing should be used as Scripture in the churches except that designated as canonical. According to Augustine canonicity is determined by the majority of Catholic churches and also by the judgment of the apostolic churches and those to which letters have been sent. The canon was closing:

But who can fail to be aware that the sacred canon of Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, is confined within its own limits and that it stands so absolutely in a superior position to all later letters of the bishops, that about it we can hold no manner of doubt or disputation whether what is confessedly contained in it is right and true; but that all the letters of the bishops which have been written, or are being written since the closing of the canon, are liable to be refuted if there be anything contained in them which strays from the truth, either by the discourse of someone who happens to be wiser in the matter than themselves, or by the weightier authority and more learned experience of other bishops, or by the authority of Councils. . . .<sup>3</sup>

And councils must yield to plenary councils and even these to the uncovering of truth long concealed. The canonical books ought to be so well known that their content may be readily recalled. Simple rules of faith and morals within these writings ought to be conned for the increase of knowledge. Only after

<sup>2</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 8, 13.

<sup>3</sup> *On Baptism, Against the Donatists*, II, 3-4.



this has been accomplished may one advance to the more obscure passages.<sup>4</sup> It is important to know Scripture, for "Scripture asserts nothing but the catholic faith, in regard to things past, future, and present. It is a narrative of the past, a prophecy of the future, and a description of the present."<sup>5</sup>

That many versions of the Scriptural writings were accessible to Augustine is attested by his observations. His predilection is for the Septuagint, which seemed to him especially worthy, since by tradition the seventy-two elders working individually arrived at exactly the same meaning and order of words as if one scholar had done the entire job.<sup>6</sup> Indeed Augustine who had high regard for Jerome ("a man most learned and skilled in all three languages, who translated these same Scriptures into the Latin speech, not from the Greek, but from the Hebrew"<sup>7</sup>) wished that the author of the Vulgate had put his time on a translation of the Septuagint, the authority of which was great, its use extensive. In addition it had the advantage of apostolic use:

For my part, I would much rather that you would furnish us with a translation of the Greek version of the canonical Scriptures known as the work of the Seventy Translators. . . . I wish you would have the kindness to open up to me what you think to be the reason of the frequent discrepancies between the text supported by the Hebrew codices and the Greek Septuagint version. For the latter has no mean authority, seeing that it has obtained so wide circulation, and was the one which the apostles used, as is not only proved by looking to the text itself, but has also been as I remember, affirmed by yourself. You would therefore confer upon us a much greater boon if you gave an exact Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint version: for the variations found in the different codices of the Latin text are intolerably numerous: and it is so justly open to suspicion as possibly different from what is to be found in the Greek, that one has no confidence in either quoting it or proving anything by its help.<sup>8</sup>

Jerome's scholarly work was slow to come into general use. Indeed in the letter just quoted we have Augustine mentioning the amusing incident of one of the North African bishops who had had the temerity to introduce to his flock Jerome's version, and who in reading a passage from Jonah (the passage was IV:6, "And the Lord made to come up an *ivy*" rather than "gourd") aroused such an outcry by the Greeks in the congregation, who shouted corrections, that the Jewish residents were appealed to

<sup>4</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 9, 14.

<sup>5</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, III, 14.

<sup>6</sup> *City of God*, XVIII, 42.

<sup>7</sup> *City of God*, XVIII, 43.

<sup>8</sup> *Letters*, LXXI, 4, 6.



and testified that the Septuagint and the Latin translation of it were correct, and Jerome was wrong! Augustine professed to prefer the Italian (*Itala*, or *Vetus Latina*) translation,<sup>9</sup> but he acknowledged not only the multiplicity of translations (especially in the Latin) but also the necessity of following the Greek rather than the Latin. But the great number of translators is of assistance to him who would get at the truth of word and idiom provided all positive error is removed.<sup>10</sup> Augustine was neither a linguist nor critic of texts. He was, par excellence, the mystic preacher and comprehensive theologian. If two versions (*interpretationes*) seemed to convey identical truth, the use of one or the other did not matter. It was the *meaning* back of the words which was important, not the words themselves. And the importance of this meaning was the importance of truth.

The two testaments were to be taken as a unit. Thus "in the Old Testament there is a veiling of the New, and in the New Testament there is a revealing of the Old."<sup>11</sup> There were four ways in which the Old Testament was made accessible to those who wished to know it: by history, etiology, analogy, and allegory, and Augustine shows how Jesus Christ, in his teaching, made use of all four devices.<sup>12</sup>

Canonical Scripture must be without error, since it was the truth of God moving upon and through the holy writers who composed the works. But how could this truth be ascertained? This question is an old one for us but for Augustine it was vital and fresh. The heretics and schismatics not only could cite Scripture for their purpose, but they decided what *was* Scripture. The Manichaeans rejected the Old Testament, and selected of other books those passages which agreed with their doctrine. Augustine put it graphically:

It is one thing to reject the books themselves . . . ; and it is another thing to say, This holy man wrote only the truth, and this is his epistle, but some verses are his, and some are not. And then, when you are asked for a proof, instead of referring to more correct or more ancient manuscripts, or to a greater number, or to the original text, your reply is, This verse is his, because it makes for me; and this is not his, because it is against me. Are you, then, the rule of truth? (*Tu es ergo regula veritatis?*<sup>13</sup>) In this respect the testimony of the Catholic Church is conspicuous, as supported by a succession of bishops from the original seats of the apostles (*funda-*

<sup>9</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 15, 22.

<sup>10</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 14, 21; II, 15, 22.

<sup>11</sup> *On the Catechising of the Uninstructed*, 4, 8.

<sup>12</sup> *On the Profit of Believing*, 5f.

<sup>13</sup> Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XLII, 246.

*tissimis sedibus Apostolorum*,<sup>14</sup>) up to the present time, and by the consent of so many nations. Accordingly, should there be a question about the text of some passage, as there are a few passages with various readings well known to students of the sacred Scriptures, we should first consult the manuscripts of the country where the religion was first taught: and if these still varied, we should take the text of the greater number, or of the more ancient. And if any uncertainty remained, we should consult the original text. This is the method employed by those who, in any question about the Scriptures, do not lose sight of the regard due to their authority, and inquire with the view of gaining information, not of raising disputes. . . .<sup>15</sup>

Toward the end of the same treatise Augustine charges Faustus the Manichæan with setting up his own authority:

Your design clearly is to deprive Scripture of all authority, and to make every man's mind the judge what passage of Scripture he is to approve of, and what to disapprove of. This is not to be subject to Scripture in matters of faith, but to make Scripture subject to you. Instead of making the high authority of Scripture the reason of approval, every man makes his approval the reason for thinking a passage correct. If, then, you discard authority, to what, poor feeble soul, darkened by the mists of carnality, to what, I beseech you, will you betake yourself?<sup>16</sup>

Or again in the same treatise: "Scripture has a sacredness peculiar to itself."<sup>17</sup> Its authority has come from God through the apostles and bishops, and therefore no canonical writing can be wrong. The manuscript may be at fault, or the translation wrong, or the reader may not have understood. But Scripture cannot be wrong! Heroes in Scripture may do wrong and prophets report evil actions as well as good, the evil typifying or foretelling something good to come, as for example Judah lying with Tamar:

In foretelling good, it is of no consequence whether the typical actions are good or bad. If it is written in red ink that Ethiopians are black, or in black ink that the Gauls are white, this circumstance does not affect the information which the writing conveys. . . .<sup>18</sup>

The Scriptures agree essentially, and this agreement in spite of their varying origins is a notable contrast to the works of the philosophers.<sup>19</sup> Were there not four lives of Jesus, then? To be sure, but Augustine can prove their harmony. The four gospels differ in arrangement and order, but each comes out of

14 *Ibid.*, XLII, 246.

15 *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan*, XI, 2.

16 *Ibid.*, XXXII, 19.

17 *Ibid.*, XI, 5.

18 *Ibid.*, XXII, 83.

19 *City of God*, XVIII, 41.

the memory of the evangelist or, "each of the evangelists believed it to have been his duty to relate what he had to relate in that order in which it had pleased God to suggest to his recollection the matters he was engaged in recording."<sup>20</sup> The gospels complement one another. For example, take the resurrection story of the women approaching the tomb. Matthew has the angel outside seated upon the rolled-back stone. Mark reports that the women entered the sepulchre and there saw a young man "sitting on the right side, covered with a long white garment." Augustine comments:

But the explanation may be, that Matthew has simply said nothing about the angel whom they saw when they entered the sepulchre, and that Mark has said nothing about the one whom they saw sitting outside upon the stone. In this way they would have seen two angels, and have got two separate angelic reports relating to Jesus. . . .<sup>21</sup>

When there are two differing reports of the same incident, the account of that evangelist who was on the scene ought to be followed. Possibly the other author had a lapse of memory: "It is only seemly, however, that no charge of absolute unveracity should be laid against the evangelists. . . ." <sup>22</sup> Incidentally, it should be noted that F. C. Burkitt has made out a good case for the argument that in *The Harmony of the Gospels* Augustine uses the Vulgate, the gospels of which had already appeared by 384. The Scriptures could not be in error.<sup>23</sup> What happens, then, when Matthew quotes Zechariah but attributed the saying to Jeremiah in the passage which concerns the action of Judas in refunding the pieces of silver?

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."<sup>24</sup>

An explanation offered in Augustine's day was that those codices containing Jeremiah were wrong, and at least one copy gave no name to the prophet. But Augustine had investigated the matter, and had found that the majority and the more ancient codices read Jeremiah. And if a copyist tried to correct the text, he would tend to omit rather than insert the name. Augustine carries the solution of the problem back to the secret wisdom

<sup>20</sup> *The Harmony of the Gospels*, II, 21, 51.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 24, 63.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 12, 29.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, II, 12, 28.

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 27:9-10.

of God who inspired the writing. It was his purpose that Jeremiah should appear in the place of the correct Zechariah to show that *whatever one prophet said might with equal truth be credited to all prophets*, since one spirit worked through all! Matthew, therefore, though he knew better, bowed to superior judgment of the Holy Spirit. There is an added reason for the replacement—a mystical significance is attached. In Jeremiah we find the purchase of a field, and in Zechariah thirty pieces of silver. If, therefore, the passages are found together in Matthew, at least in inference, they bear out the evangelist's own words which commence with "whom the children of Israel did value," and so on—words which are neither in Jeremiah or Zechariah.

Augustine withstood even the scholarly Jerome over the truth of Scripture. Jerome in an exposition of Galatians II had implied that the fracas between Paul and Peter was staged for the good of the brethren, rather than being a genuine incident. This shocked Augustine to such an extent that he wrote Jerome about it. The quarrel between the two great men followed and was further complicated by the non-deliverance of letters and the charge of disloyalty to friendship. Jerome claimed that Paul and Peter alike acted inconsistently because they feared the Jewish believers, but Augustine attributed their behavior to their compassion. The barb which pierced the sensitive spirit of Augustine was not that either Paul or Peter could do wrong, but that the *story* of Paul withstanding Peter to his face was a dissimulation. That could not be! The writers of Scripture could not deceive:

It is one question whether it may be at any time the duty of a good man to deceive (*mentiri*): but it is another question whether it can have been the duty of a writer of Holy Scripture to deceive: nay, it is not another question—it is no question at all.<sup>25</sup>

And again:

For I confess to your charity that I have learned to yield this respect and honor only to the canonical books of Scripture (*solis eis Scripturarum libris qui jam canonici appellantur*<sup>26</sup>), of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error. And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the ms. (codicem) is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it . . . I do not need to say that I do not suppose you to wish your books to be read like those of prophets or of apostles, con-

<sup>25</sup> *Letters*, XXVIII.

<sup>26</sup> Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XXXIII, 277.

cerning which it would be wrong to doubt that they are free from error.<sup>27</sup>

There is no authority as high as the canonical Scriptures, as he warns Vincentius who had been citing the example of the blessed Cyprian.<sup>28</sup>

Even the account in Genesis is true history,<sup>29</sup> but it also presents an excellent occasion for allegory. Augustine was a man of his day. The Stoics had preserved the values of ancient theological literature by affirming that no matter how fanciful or fantastic the tale, there must be a spiritual meaning conveyed by it. Early Christian writers were quick to seize upon this additional scriptural incentive and spiritual truth. Clement of Alexandria found in Christian holy writings the same proof of greatness and value which he had doubtless found in pagan literature.

Scripture is not only true, it means something. It may be plain or obscure:

For in the full abundance of Holy Scriptures we feed upon the plain parts, we are exercised by the obscure: by the one, hunger is driven away, and daintiness (*fastidium*) by the other.<sup>30</sup>

Or again:

But hasty and careless readers are led astray by many and manifold obscurities and ambiguities, substituting one meaning for another; and in some places they cannot hit upon even a fair interpretation. Some of the expressions are so obscure as to shroud the meaning in thickest darkness. And I do not doubt that all this was divinely arranged for the purpose of subduing pride by toil, and by preventing a feeling of satiety in the intellect. . . . Nobody, however, has any doubt about the facts, both that it is pleasanter in some cases to have knowledge communicated through figures, and that what is attended with difficulty in the seeking gives greater pleasure in the finding.<sup>31</sup>

Heretics help the Christian here, for their captious objections to Scripture force even the babes in Christ to seek the deeper meanings of their faith.<sup>32</sup> Signs are either proper, as when they point out the thing intended, or figurative, when they are used for something else. Thus "*bos*" means ox, but ox sometimes signifies a preacher of the gospel, "as Scripture signifies, according to the apostle's explanation, when it says: 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.'"<sup>33</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Letters*, LXXXII.

<sup>28</sup> *Letters*, XCIII.

<sup>29</sup> *City of God*, XIII, 21.

<sup>30</sup> *Sermons*, XXI.

<sup>31</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 6, 7-8.

<sup>32</sup> *Sermons*, LI.

<sup>33</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 10, 15.



But let us get back to the Paradise of Genesis. As Augustine put it, "... some allegorize all that concerns Paradise itself":<sup>34</sup> the four rivers are the four virtues; the trees, all knowledge, and so on. But to Augustine these things are better connected with Christ and his Church. Thus, Paradise is the Church; the four rivers, the four gospels; the fruit-trees, the saints; the tree of life, Christ; and the tree of knowledge, one's free choice. And he closes the paragraph thus:

These and similar allegorical interpretations may be suitably put upon Paradise without giving offense to anyone, while yet we believe the strict truth of the history, confirmed by its circumstantial narrative of facts.<sup>35</sup>

If the reader of Holy Writ is ignorant of natural occurrences, he may miss the import of the figurative language. For example, if one does not know that the serpent exposes its body to its attackers in order to protect its head, he will miss the meaning of Christ's advice that we should be wise as serpents: "That is to say, that for the sake of our head, which is Christ, we should willingly offer our body to the persecutors, but the Christian faith should, as it were, be destroyed in us, if to save the body we deny our God."<sup>36</sup> Or again, the same advice is applicable in another sense, for just as the serpent sheds its skin by squeezing through a small hole, so we should put off the old man and put on the new—putting off the old "by coming through a narrow place, according to the saying of our Lord, 'Enter ye in at the strait gate.'"<sup>37</sup>

Ignorance of numbers also prevents knowledge of what Scripture signifies. For example, do we know why Moses and Elijah and Christ fasted forty days? Forty is ten times four: four signifies the division of one day (morning, noon, evening, night) and the seasons (spring, summer, autumn, winter). Ten stands for the Creator and the creature and is broken down into three, (the Trinity) and seven (the creature). In the creature we have life, or soul (three, for we love God with our whole heart, soul, and mind) and body (which consists of the four elements). Thus in this one number we compass all knowledge and that knowledge is interwoven with time.

Or take the number fifty, which stands for sacred Pentecost, and multiply it by three (which stands for three dispensa-

<sup>34</sup> *City of God*, XIII, 21.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII, 21.

<sup>36</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, II, 16, 24.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 24.

tions; before the law, under the law, and under grace; or perhaps for the Trinity); then add to this thrice times fifty the Trinity again, and you will have the number of fishes taken after the resurrection when the net was lowered on the right-hand side of the boat, a "mystery of the most Holy Church."

Whereas Matthew reckons the generations of our Lord in numbers around forty, Luke, from the baptism, makes the numbers seventy-seven, and signifies abolition of all sin. How? Seventy-seven, is seven times eleven. We have already seen what seven typifies, namely, the creature who is sinful. Eleven stands for sin, for to reach it, we must transgress the number ten (the Decalogue), for sin is always the seeking of something more ("Thou wast in hope, if thou didst depart from Me, that thou wouldst have something more"); or those are blamed "who seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." Thus we are to forgive our brother, not seven times, but seventy times seven.<sup>38</sup> Or, as Augustine comments in a later sermon on this very passage:

For the law is ten, sin eleven. . . . Because to get to eleven, there is the transgression of the ten. . . . This high mystery was figured out when the tabernacle was commanded to be built, there are many things mentioned there in number, which are a great mystery. Among the rest, curtains of haircloth were ordered to be made, not ten but eleven; because by haircloth is signified the confession of sins.<sup>39</sup>

So here seven is used for the whole, as seven days stand for complete revolution of time. So seventy-seven stands for all sins.

Even the simplest of Scriptures must have a deeper meaning than would appear on the surface. For example: "Jesus passeth by" means that many of his experiences have passed by: his birth of a Virgin ("is He being born always?"), his infancy ("is He suckled always?"), and so on.

All Scripture is literal or figurative or both at once. Thus the story of the Passion should be taken literally. Jacob's anointing of the stone upon which he laid his head when he dreamed is to be taken figuratively. But literal and figurative interpretations are excellently portrayed in the Scriptural report of Abraham's two sons, one by a bond servant, the other by a free-woman. This was fact and also a sort of fiction for it signified the two Testaments.<sup>40</sup>

The *Expositions on the Psalms* is filled with allegory. In

38 *Sermons*, LI.

39 *Sermons*, LXXXIII.

40 *Sermons*, LXXXIX.

Psalm 91, for example ("under his wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall surround thee with a shield"), Augustine asks:

What are 'the wings,' the same is 'the shield': since there are neither wings nor shield. If either were literally, how could the one be the same as the other? . . . But all these expressions, indeed, are figuratively used through likenesses. If Christ were really a Stone (Acts 4:10, 11), He could not be a Lion; if a Lion (Rev. 5:5), He could not be a Lamb: but He is called both Lion, and Lamb (John 1:29), and Stone and Calf, and anything else of the sort metaphorically, because He is neither Stone, nor Lion, nor Lamb, nor Calf, but Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all of us. . . .<sup>41</sup>

Or again, in reference to "the Destruction that wasteth at noon-day":

But why does he say, 'at noon-day'? The persecution is very hot: and thus the noon signifies the excessive heat. . . . The demon that is 'in the noon-day,' represents the heat of a furious persecution: for these are our Lord's words, 'The sun was up; and because they had no root, they withered away.'<sup>42</sup>

Note the careful approach of the bishop who takes seriously his 'cure of souls':

As we listened with much attention, while the Psalm was in reading, so let us listen attentively, while the Lord revealeth the mysteries which He hath deigned to obscure in this passage. For some mysteries in the Scriptures are shut up for this reason, not that they may be denied, but that they may be opened unto those who knock."<sup>43</sup>

In the preceding Psalm the words, "the floods lift up their voices" present the opportunity again to connect the scene with Christ and the Church. The sea is the world which, as Christ is preached, becomes angry: the vessel is the Church, and Christ walked over the waves (that is over empires and kings), subduing them to himself.

In Psalm XIV the expression, "their throat is an open sepulchre," is explained as "either the voracity of the ever open palate, or allegorically those who slay."<sup>44</sup> Or again, in Homily III in *The Epistle of St. John*, the words "children, it is the last hour," ought to counsel us to grow because it is the last hour, and whoever is born of the water and the Spirit is an infant:

Now his mother is the Church; and her breasts are the two Testaments of the Divine Scriptures. Hence let him suck the milk of all the things that as signs of spiritual truths were done in time for our eternal salva-

<sup>41</sup> *On the Psalms*, XCI.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, XCI, 8.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, XCIV.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, XIV, 4.

tion, that being nourished and strengthened, he may attain to the eating of solid meat, which is, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' Our milk is Christ in His humility; our meat, the self-same Christ equal with the Father. With milk He nourisheth thee, that He may feed thee with bread: for with the heart spiritually to touch Christ is to know that He is equal with the Father."<sup>45</sup>

We have to remember that Scripture has its peculiar style as we have. Thus, according to Augustine, we speak of a "blind ditch" (the ditch is not blind, but lies concealed to our eyes) or bitter lupin (lupin is bitter to *our* taste, but is not bitter). So Augustine explains the difficult problem of God "tempting" man, by saying that God tempteth man that He may make him to know if he loves Him, as was the experience of Job.<sup>46</sup>

Not only does secular literature have its fables where animals speak to each other, such as in Horace and Aesop, but in the Scriptures, also, trees seek a king and speak: "which, in any wise, is all feigned, with intent that one may get to the thing intended, by a feigned narration indeed, yet not a lying one, but with a truthful signification."<sup>47</sup>

What, then, is the goal of the knowledge of Scripture? Augustine tells us:

... we should clearly understand that the fulfillment and the end of the Law, and of all Holy Scripture, is the love of an object which is to be enjoyed, and the love of an object that can enjoy the other in fellowship with ourselves.<sup>48</sup>

And again:

Whoever, then, thinks that he understands the Holy Scriptures, or any part of them, but puts such an interpretation upon them as does not tend to build up this two-fold love of God and our neighbor, does not yet understand them as he ought.<sup>49</sup>

Or again:

As for the books of the apostles and prophets, we read them as a record of our faith, to encourage our hope and animate our love.<sup>50</sup>

The goal of the Christian life is faith, hope, and love which the whole structure of Scripture supports,<sup>51</sup> and he who keeps firm

<sup>45</sup> *Ep. St. John*, Hom., III, 1.

<sup>46</sup> *On the Gospel of John*, Trac., XLII.

<sup>47</sup> *To Consentius: Against Lying*, 28.

<sup>48</sup> *On Christian Doctrine*, I, 35, 39.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 36, 40.

<sup>50</sup> *Reply to Faustus, the Manichaean*, XIII, 18.

<sup>51</sup> *On the Trinity*, VIII, 6.

grip on these does not need Holy Writ save to teach others.<sup>52</sup>

Finally, what does Scripture mean for Augustine? Scripture is a method of ascertaining the will of God.<sup>53</sup> It must be true. Copyists may err, which may explain divergencies between the Hebrew and the Greek in the diversity of numbers;<sup>54</sup> authorship might be questionable and subject to new light;<sup>55</sup> versions may vary, as they do, for the Holy Spirit has thus given free rein to prophecy;<sup>56</sup> manuscripts may differ;<sup>57</sup> ambiguities may occur, some of which could be traceable to incorrect punctuation or pronunciation;<sup>58</sup> but Scripture is true: "The truth of God, in the Scripture of God, is better than virginity of man in the mind or flesh of any."<sup>59</sup>

And again, the Scriptures convey meaning or truth, though it might be obscure. If it were outside experience or beyond reason, it was to be accepted on faith:

And what we have neither had experience of through our bodily senses, nor have been able to reach through the intellect, must undoubtedly be believed on the testimony of those witnesses by whom the Scriptures, justly called divine, were written; and who by divine assistance were enabled, either through bodily sense or intellectual perception to see or to foresee the things in question.<sup>60</sup>

The use of allegory by Augustine was not only a means of making Scripture say something, it was also a technique for bringing Scripture down to date, by forcing ancient words to minister, through prophecy, to the weaving of present patterns of behavior or through the summoning to higher ideals. But it was also dangerous for it came close to making Scripture say what he wanted it to say (through multiplicity of allegories of identical Scripture), and it prepared the way for Catholic or Protestant, later, to find in Scripture what he would.

52 *Ibid.*, I, 43.

53 *On Christian Doctrine*, III, 1.

54 *The City of God*, XV, 13.

55 *Retractions*, II, 4.

56 *Ibid.*, XV, 14.

57 *City of God*, XX, 20.

58 *On Christian Doctrine*, III, 2f.

59 *Of Holy Virginity*, 18.

60 *Enchiridion*, 4.



## THEODORUS JACOBUS FRELINGHUYSEN THE FATHER OF AMERICAN PIETISM

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So distinctive is revivalism of American religion that for "almost two hundred years it is revivalism more than any other phenomenon that has supplied the land-marks in our religious history. . . . It would not be difficult and by no means unsatisfactory to write the history of American Protestantism from the standpoint of its periodic awakenings."<sup>1</sup>

From the beginning of the eighteenth century a new period of philosophic speculation, formalism, moral laxity, and religious indifference gripped the European Continent. Yeast soon leavens the whole lump and so these influences were quickly felt among the people in the American colonies, which though predominantly dissenters from the mother country, were, nevertheless, still an integral part of European culture. The same blood was still in their veins and every road was still open toward the home lands. And even though the colonies varied greatly in their religious situations and background, religious decline was common to all. Characteristic of the age was the observation of Increase Mather when he stated, "Clear sound conversions are not frequent. Many of the rising generation are profane drunkards, swearers, licentious and scoffers at the power of Godliness."<sup>2</sup> Or, as Samuel Blair later analyzed the situation,

A very lamentable ignorance of the main essentials of true practical religion, and the doctrine nextly relating thereto, very generally prevailed. The nature and necessity of the new birth was but little known or thought of. The necessity of a conviction of sin and misery, by the Holy Spirit opening and applying the law to the conscience, in order to a saving closure with Christ was hardly known at all, to the most. There was scarcely any suspicion at all in general, of any danger of depending upon self-righteousness and not upon the righteousness of Christ alone for salvation.<sup>3</sup>

Rising up against this tide of irreligion and formality on

1 Peter G. Mode, *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity* (New York, 1923), 41.

2 William W. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York, 1942), 273.

3 Abraham Messler, *A Pastor's Manual* (New Brunswick, N. J., 1853), 39.

the European Continent and particularly in Germany, was German Pietism. The importance of this emphasis against cold formalism was in its influence not merely on the Lutheran Church in Germany but even more on the revival of the various religious bodies, the members of which swarmed to the American colonies and became participants in the "Great Awakening"—that tidal wave of reforming zeal which gave to American life its landmarks of religious history perhaps more than any other phenomenon.<sup>4</sup>

In relating the extent of the revivals in his *Narrative of Surprising Conversions in New England*, Jonathan Edwards clearly reflects a development which is of tremendous significance.

But this Shower of divine Blessing has been yet more extensive: There was no small Degree of it in some parts of the Jerseys; as I was informed when I was in New-York (in a long Journey I took at that time of the year for my Health) by some people of the Jerseys, whom I saw: Especially the Rev. Mr. William Tennent, a Minister, who seemed to have such things much at heart, told me of a great awakening of many in a Place called the Mountains, under the Ministry of one Mr. Cross; and of a very considerable Revival of Religion in another Place under the Ministry of his Brother the Rev. Mr. Gilbert Tennent; and also in another Place under the ministry of a very pious young Gentleman, whose name as I remember was Freelinghousa.<sup>5</sup>

It is here that Edwards, whether he realized it or not, revealed the framework of the development of revivalism in colonial America. Had he but added to his list of the Tennents and "Freelinghousa," the German groups, he would have completed the list of the leading forces undergirding colonial revivalism.

It has been recently shown that revivalism did not have its beginning in New England, as is usually thought, but that numerous and varied were its beginnings and developments outside the Puritan stronghold. "Colonial Revivalism began in the Middle colonies where German pietism had prepared the way by its emphasis upon inner, personal religion."<sup>6</sup> Herein rests the first tangible phase of "evangelical quickening" in the American colonies which was part of a world movement.

As already witnessed, Reformed as well as Lutherans of the Palatinate emigrating from Germany to Pennsylvania were

4 Moe, *The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity*, 41.

5 Jonathan Edwards, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton, and the Neighboring Towns and Villages of New-Hampshire in New England* (London, 1738), 2.

6 Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America*, 274.

under strong pietistic influences. Even more important in propagandizing pietism were the so-called "sect" groups; the Mennonites, Dunkers, and Moravians. Yet this influence, as already seen, although deep and significant, was somewhat static and inactive. Owing to the language problem and a strong doctrine of "other-worldliness," such influence remained for the most part within the boundaries of their own groups.<sup>7</sup> It was not until revivalism, which knows no boundaries, took root, that pietism rose to its greatest influence in the new world. And well to the front of this new impulse stands the pietistic Dutch pastor—Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen.

Frelinghuysen was born at Hagen in Westphalia on November 6, 1692.<sup>8</sup> He was not a Hollander but a German.<sup>9</sup> He was the son of the Reverend Johannes Henricus Frylinghousen, pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church at Hagen from 1682 to 1728. Following some basic training in his home, Frelinghuysen studied under Professor Gilbertus (in Westphalia) and later under Otto Verbrugge, Professor of Theology and Oriental Languages at Lingon.<sup>10</sup> Of no little significance was the fact that in securing his education he was much affected by the pietistic doctrine taught by Spener at Frankfurt in 1670 and by Francke at Halle.<sup>11</sup> He was ordained in his native country by Johannes Brunius, in the year 1717.<sup>12</sup> Besides serving as pastor in his own country near Embden, he also served in East-Friesland for a short time.<sup>13</sup> More important for reputation's sake, however, was his call to the "subrectorship of the Latin Academy at Enkhuizen." In the minutes of this school (dated September, 1718) we read: "At last (they found) Theodorus Jacobus Vrelinkhuysen, who after being examined by the Curators, was elected

7 Charles H. Maxson, *The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies* (Chicago, 1920), 5.

8 It was earlier believed that he was born at Lingon in East-Friesland. (See *Dictionary of American Biography*, VII; also Messler, *Memorial Sermons and Historical Notes* (New York, 1853, 165). However, records of his baptism point to Westphalia as the more probable place. (See Peter H. B. Frelinghuysen, *Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen*, Princeton, N. J., 1938, 15).

9 "That he began to preach in the Netherlands language, was in consequence of the advice of the Rev. Otto Verbrugge, late Professor of Theology and the Oriental Languages at Lingon (then his esteemed instructor). . ." (See Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*, trans. William Demarest (New York, 1856).

10 *Ibid.*, 15, 153-54.

11 F. H. B. Frelinghuysen, *T. J. Frelinghuysen*, 17.

12 T. J. Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*, 153 f. "I am now about 46 years old, and already in the twentieth year of my ministry, having been ordained to my office A.D. 1717, at East-Friesland. . . ."

13 James J. Bergen, "The 'Rebellion' at Raritan in 1723," *Somerset County Historical Quarterly*, III (July, 1914).

by the town-council and appointed conrector."<sup>14</sup> This assignment, however, was short lived, for soon after the Reverend Mr. Sicco Tjady, "a godly minister" belonging to the Classis of Amsterdam, "interested himself, through the influence of the Reverend Bernardus Freeman, of Long Island, in procuring an evangelical and pious man"<sup>15</sup> to answer the ever-increasing demand for Dutch ministers to the new world.<sup>16</sup> Either Mr. Tjady was a good diplomat or Frelinghuysen saw the opportunity for greater service, for in 1720 (perhaps at the end of 1719 since in 1720 he was already stationed as resident pastor at Raritan)<sup>17</sup> he set sail for America in the *King George*. After a short stay in New York, where he landed, he settled immediately as pastor of the Dutch Reformed church at Raritan, Somerset County, New Jersey, from whence his call had come. No sooner, however, had he landed in New York than it became apparent that he would face difficulties. He was invited by the local minister, the Reverend Henricus Boel, to preach from his pulpit.<sup>18</sup> Frelinghuysen's omission of the Lord's Prayer at set places in the service at once disturbed the conservative host. It soon became evident that the new pastor had a different conception of religion. This was nowhere more clearly felt than among his own congregations in the Raritan Valley,<sup>19</sup> where he preached his first sermon on January 31, 1720.

14 Quoted by P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, *T. J. Frelinghuysen*, 18.

15 Messler, *Memorial Sermons*, 166.

16 T. J. Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*, 6-7.

"When the call from the churches in New-jersey was received, a pious minister of the Classis of Amsterdam, named Sicco Tjadde, interested himself in procuring an evangelical minister to proceed thither. While inquiries were being made, Mr. Frelinghuysen passed through the town in which Sicco Tjadde resided, on his way to Emden, to assume the rectorship of the academy at that place, to which he had received an invitation, and put up for the night at the house of an elder of the church. When the hour for family worship arrived the young stranger was invited to conduct it. He readily consented, and after reading a chapter in the sacred Scriptures, gave a brief exposition, and concluded with prayer. The elder was so much pleased with his remarks and with his whole spirit and conversation, that in the morning, when he was about to depart on his journey, he exacted a promise from him to make his house his home again, on his return, and then hastening to his pastor, exclaimed: 'I have found a man to go to America.'"

17 *Klagte Von Eenige Leeden der Nederduytse Hervorade Kerk, Woonende op Harletans, Etc., in de Provincie Van Nieu-Jersey, in Noord-America. Onder de Kroos Van Groot-Brittanye over het Gedray, aldaar en Elders, Van Do. Theodorus Jacobus Frilinghuisin Not syn Kerken-Raaden* (Raaden, 1725; trans. M. G. Hanson, 1876), i-ii. "... Rev. Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen came over to be our resident pastor in the year 1720. . ."

18 This occurred on January 17, 1720 (see *ibid.*, 51.)

19 Frelinghuysen served four churches in this region—Raritan, Three Mile Run, Six Mile Run, and North-Branch (later changed to Harlingen). These churches were already organized when Frelinghuysen accepted the call, for it is stated

Never before had the people of this valley witnessed such force, earnestness, and passion in the pulpit. His pointed sermons with their emphasis on guilt, faith, sin, holiness, repentance, the necessity of regeneration;<sup>20</sup> his introduction of lay preaching<sup>21</sup> and his general advocacy of inner religion over against a mere outward form were strange indeed to congregations which knew nothing but formality and passionless orthodoxy and regarded ministers as church officials and functionaries and not as evangelists and "soul-savers." He so thoroughly presented regeneration and conversion as a crisis in the believer's experience "that almost none of his hearers dared claim that they had been converted." This is clearly stated by the opposition itself.

We welcomed him with joy and love, in the hope that his service would be for our edification. But alas! to our great sorrow, we, soon, and increasingly found that the result was very different. His denunciations uttered against all of us from the pulpit . . . and on all occasions, to the effect that we were all unconverted . . . were severe and bitter.<sup>22</sup>

In his very first sermon Frelinghuysen attacked the general laxity of the congregation. "The outward performance of religious duties," he burst forth, "without a suitable frame of mind, He [the Lord] hates."<sup>23</sup> To ask his members to "lay aside all pride, haughtiness, and ideas of inherent worthiness, and humble themselves deeply before the Lord; and confess and acknowledge themselves to be dust and ashes,"<sup>24</sup> was indeed a strong dose for his wealthy members who were so content with their conventional religion. Without doubt most alarming of all was the declaration on the part of the new pastor that only the regen-

that the call had already been waiting two years. It was released by the Raritan congregations on June 5, 1718. (See *Extracts from the Acts of the Classis of Amsterdam, 1632-1739*, New Brunswick, N. J., I).

"The territory embraced in his charge was great for one individual to supervise. It extended from New-Brunswick to the north and south branches of the Raritan River, in length from fifteen to twenty miles, and in breadth from ten to twelve, comprehending nearly the whole of the present county of Somerset, east of the mountain, and at this time (1872) occupied by sixteen congregations of the Reformed Dutch Church. The place of his residence was about three miles west of New Brunswick; and thence he visited and preached at all the different points where his services were required." Messler, *Memorial Sermons*, 163-67.

20 P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, *T. J. Frelinghuysen*, 21.

21 Frelinghuysen "appointed from among the most gifted and experienced of his male members certain individuals whom he called 'helpers,' whose office was to expound the Scriptures in the meetings for prayer and conduct them with order, visit and converse with the anxious . . . and to catechise the youth." (See Messler, *Memorial Sermons*, 27). This practice by many was regarded a bold departure from the traditional church and hence a cause of great discontent.

22 *Klagte Von Eenige*, 1-11.

23 *Ibid.*

24 T. J. Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*, 26 f.



erated should be acceptable communicants. Only "penitent, believing, upright, and converted persons" could be invited to the Lord's Table, said the Dutch Domine. The following is Frelinghuysen's own analysis of his position on this delicate subject.

We also have a sanctuary under the New Testament—the Lord's supper, which has come in place of the Passover, and which, it is explicitly and solemnly declared, that none of the unconverted, who are still in their natural and unclean state, because not sanctified by the Holy Ghost, should approach; for the Lord has pronounced a severe punishment upon all who unworthily approach this sanctuary, and partake of these holy things. He has at the same time enjoined upon the overseers of the church, that they debar strangers and the ungodly, and put them from among them; that the covenant of God may not be profaned, and his wrath stirred up against the whole congregation. . . .

For whom is the Lord's supper instituted? It is not instituted for the dead; for they are already in their place, where they shall remain forever. It must also not be administered to the dying, for they are not in a state to receive it; nor to children, because they are unable to examine themselves, but to living adults; yet not to all who are partakers of corporeal life; since it is instituted only for the regenerated, who are possessed of spiritual food that spiritual men only can partake of, to their invigoration.<sup>25</sup>

That this was then not observed, Frelinghuysen himself indicates.

Truly, it is manifest that the Lord's supper is now frequently thus desecrated; for not only does one unworthily approach; but how many of these who receive the sacred elements are either ignorant, or ungodly; as drunkards, slanderers, backbiters, profaners of God's name and day, vain and worldly-minded, or merely moral persons who do not possess, but hate true godliness! . . . I have three times (it is now the fourth time) administered the Lord's supper and urged this point, that the unconverted may not approach, and that the wicked must, according to our doctrine, be debarred. But what murmuring has this excited? how many tongues, set on fire of hell, have uttered their slanders? . . . I would ask you, who have been, and perhaps still are so greatly displeased on this account? Is not this the doctrine of the Reformed Church? . . . Why, make yourselves guilty of such slanders and backbitings? Say you that I speak too hard and sharply? must I not speak in accordance with the word of God?<sup>26</sup>

On one occasion while administering the Lord's Supper (in the church at Six-Mile Run) Frelinghuysen is quoted as saying, "See! See! even the people of the world and the impenitent are coming, that they may eat and drink judgment to themselves."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-66.

<sup>27</sup> Messler, *Memorial Sermons*, 170.

It is said that many after having left their seats stopped and returned, "not daring to commune." The Domine's general situation here may well be compared with that of Jonathan Edwards, who, in 1748, was rejected by his Northampton congregation for seeking to enforce similar restrictions, limiting communion to actual religious converts. Evidence that a large number from his congregations were not converted Frelinghuysen found in the general laxity of attitude concerning youth.

..... Ye who not only with delight reflect upon the wanton extravagances of our youth, but also speak of them with such satisfaction that it is manifest you have never repented of them, recounting what heroes you have been in fighting and drinking, in card playing, in horse racing, in dancing, in acts of licentiousness, and the practice of deception upon unsuspecting females! Oh! were you truly penitent, you would be unable to think of them except with grief, or to speak of them, but with tears . . . . Ye aged sinners! that which should grieve, is a source of satisfaction to you . . . .<sup>28</sup>

Important as this might be in the life of a Christian it was still more important that back of every good moral act rests a personal conversion experience. This Frelinghuysen most forcefully expounds in his famous sermon "The Righteous Scarcely Saved."

Nor is the righteous here, one who is in such thorough compliance with the requirement of the law. "Do this and thou shalt live!" Oh! no: for "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," (But they who) have received by faith, the righteousness of the Lord Jesus. . . .<sup>29</sup> Unless we would directly oppose the word of God, we must acknowledge salvation to be a quite different thing from what is supposed by most men who yet hope to be saved; for they imagine that it is entirely well with them, and that they shall be saved, provided they avoid outward and gross sins; live honest and correct lives; perform the external duties of godliness, and diligently pursue the business of their calling. O wretched men! can that be true godliness, and the narrow way of life? Oh! no: outwardly to forsake sin, pursue virtue, and live correctly, is only in accordance with the practice of the heathen. . . .<sup>30</sup> Although God has expressly declared in his word, that something more is necessary to salvation. . . . men notwithstanding form so light an opinion of salvation, and imagine that they shall so easily acquire it. They do not carefully examine whether they be righteous, and are not concerned whether they be in a state of grace, and have an interest in Christ; but satisfy themselves with a bare and unfounded persuasion and place dependent upon the fact that they are baptised; that they have made confession of their faith; that they partake of the Lord's Supper: that they attend the house

<sup>28</sup> T. J. Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*, 162.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 101 f.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

of God, and read his word<sup>31</sup>—upon these things, I say, they rely. . . . this they regard as certain. But know, O vain man! that thou shalt not thus attain salvation! These things must indeed be done, but are not of themselves sufficient.<sup>32</sup>

. . . . But do you ask, are there none then saved, who do not experience such a conflict? No: none other. This conflict is the lot of one, more; of another, less; but there is not one, who has not some experience of it.<sup>33</sup>

Herein rested not only the basic cause for the already present controversy both from within and without his parish, but also the basic clue to Frelinghuysen's thought. Here the Domine is a full pietist—even in the Spener manner. As with the German Pietists, although not setting forth a new theology in itself, it was new to his situation. The frontier had developed an individualism which was quite content with morality as the heart and essence of religion. A doctrine emphasizing a change of heart as essential for Christian living in conjunction with a deep sense of one's sin, was extremely foreign to the Domine's situation. For Frelinghuysen, as for Spener, there was no such thing as a Christian or a Christian act without a personal religious experience. Everything that the Domine did was directed toward a conversion experience or "experimental religion."

All gracious persons (says Frelinghuysen) are described by the Spirit of God as renewed ones. They are marked by new light in their understandings, since they are not only instructed in the letter of the word, but have an experimental knowledge of spiritual things, and are as effectually convinced as if they had actually perceived them by their senses: they see him who is invisible . . . they see themselves as the chief of sinners, Jesus as the fairest of the children of men, the whole world as a fleeting show, eternity as near at hand, having respect unto the recompense of reward.<sup>34</sup>

But even more than that, "they are marked by a new and hearty service, being no longer content with the outward discharge of religious duties, of prayer, the hearing of the word, the reception of the sacraments, but desirous of doing these things in spirit and in truth."<sup>35</sup>

Finally, these same individuals "are marked by an entirely new mode of life and conversation, since they show their faith by their works, not from the improper motive of being seen by

31 The similarity of this statement to that of Spener's in his main work, *Pia Desideria* (see chap. ii, p. 17) is indeed striking. It appears very much as though it was copied almost word for word, however, we have no direct evidence.

32 T. J. Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*, 114-15.

33 *Ibid.*, 117.

34 *Ibid.*, 255.

35 *Ibid.*, 256.

men, but to glorify God and edify their neighbor.<sup>36</sup> Thus "without renewal is no one a Christian; without it can no one entertain the expectation of new heavens."<sup>37</sup> In full accordance with and basic to the "notion of pietism," Frelinghuysen, in upholding the above doctrine, regards the civil powers as without authority concerning spiritual matters. Writing to the opposition in their second citation the Domine and his group state: "Know that we are very far from citing you by means of the civil power. We employ the power of the Keys, which is an ecclesiastical power. . . ."<sup>38</sup>

Or speaking more directly on the subject of church and magistrates, Frelinghuysen declares,

Have then magistrates no power whatever over the church? They have not power in the church, but in relation to the church . . . the supreme, absolute jurisdiction . . . belongs to Jesus only, as Lord and King.<sup>39</sup>

That such an emphasis would fall heavy on many of his hearers we have already seen. Yet perhaps even more than the doctrine itself, producing the immediate spark for difficulty and controversy were the Domine's methods. Preaching to his congregation on one occasion he declared:

Come hither, ye careless, at ease in sin, yet carnal and earthly minded, ye unchaste whoremongers, adulterers, ye proud, haughty men and women, ye devotees of pleasure, drunkards, gamblers, ye disobedient, ye wicked rejectors of the Gospel, ye hypocrites and dissemblers, how suppose ye it will go with you? The period of grace has concluded. All earthly satisfaction ceaseth. Your agonies and pains as to soul and body have no end, for ye shall be cast into that lake which burns with fire and brimstone, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever, where your worm dieth not and your fire is not quenched. . . .<sup>40</sup>

Be filled with terror, ye impure swine, adulterers and whoremongers, and consider that without true repentance ye shall soon be with the impure devils; for I announce a fire better than that of Sodom and Gomorrah to all that burn in their lusts. . . .<sup>41</sup>

Strife and dissent were inevitable as a consequence of such preaching. Frelinghuysen's straightforwardness not only won him many enemies but also set him apart as one who was unorthodox and heretical. That the controversy grew more bitter and the Domine more determined, the latter himself indicates.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>38</sup> *Klagte Von Eenige*, 7.

<sup>39</sup> T. J. Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*. 77.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 311-12.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 313-14.

As far as I myself am concerned I little care what is said behind my back by ignorant, carnal men, who desire to substitute their own perverted ideas for God's Truth. They are greatly deceived, if they imagine that they will thus put me to silence; for I would sooner die a thousand deaths, than not preach the truth.<sup>42</sup>

That he did not remain silent, even before this utterance, is shown by the publication of a small volume (1721) containing three sermons illustrating his views. The sermon subjects were as follows: (1) "The Poor and Contrite in God's Temple"; (2) "The Acceptable Communicant"; and, (3) "The Church's Duty to Her Members."<sup>43</sup> This work called out his friends as well as the opposition. Bernardus Freeman of Long Island, Guliam Berthulf, the pioneer in New Jersey, Peter Henry Darsius, and especially Jacobus Schureman,<sup>44</sup> the young minister and teacher who accompanied Frelinghuysen from Holland, now rallied to the Domine's cause. To meet the leaders of the opposition who had sought advice from Boel and accused Frelinghuysen of being unorthodox, they submitted the following declaration:

Accordingly we, at present convened, take notice of the evil report concerning our minister, to the effect that he is a teacher of false doctrine. And although Rev. Henricus Boel, and his brother, the lawyer, have not been appointed as Popes and Bishops over us, yet you correspond and consult with the said gentlemen, because they assert that our minister teaches false doctrine; yet they, in three year's time, have not been able to prove this, and, indeed, never will be able . . . . Your course tends only to discord and mutiny in church and civil life . . . . Our pastor has shown himself to be an active and earnest antagonist against the lives of many persons. He has exhorted them out of the Word of God and warned them in the name of God, that the wrath of God and eternal damnation are abiding upon them; and that unless they repent, they are bringing everlasting punishment upon themselves.<sup>45</sup>

Such a procedure, however, was far from being satisfactory. An assertion of this nature merely called forth another publication; this time at the hands of the opposition, namely, the already mentioned *Klagte* of 1725. This work was a pamphlet of about 150 pages and represents a complaint to the Classis

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> Both Frelinghuysen and Schureman were unmarried at the time of their coming to America. They lived together with the Henry Reyniersz family near Three-Mile-Run. Frelinghuysen later married Eva Terhune and Schureman married her sister Antje. The Frelinghuysens had five sons and two daughters. The sons were all ministers and the daughters married ministers. (See P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, *T. J. Frelinghuysen*, 33-34).

<sup>45</sup> *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York*, ed. E. T. Corwin (Albany, 1902), III, 2201-02.



of Amsterdam against Frelinghuysen.<sup>46</sup> It is of great importance, for in it we not only have further evidence of the nature of the controversy and hence of the Domine's thought, method, and technique—but also verification for our thesis. Of the many charges listed<sup>47</sup> in this Complaint, three may be briefly stated as constituting the heart of the whole difficulty: namely, (1) that Frelinghuysen would not admit to the Lord's Table those who could not give a satisfactory account of their Christian experience: (2) that he "insisted strenuously on a change of heart"; and, (3) that he preached doctrines contrary to the standards of the church.<sup>48</sup> The latter charge also included a complaint on the practice of excommunication. That these accusations were basic to all others is shown by the Complaint's many references to a new and "strange doctrine"—namely, that of a pietist.<sup>49</sup> Speaking of this tendency the dissatisfied state:

That it might appear to you that these summoners, whatever are their pretenses, really are outside of, yes, contrary to, the Reformed Church—followers of John Labadie. . . . Cornelius Tennesen, who with former pastors, abhorred the Cain doctrine of despair, and the Labadistical opinion concerning regeneration. . . .<sup>50</sup>

And again on another occasion they declare:

They who designate us as a seceded congregation because of our fidelity, themselves together with their minister acknowledge, and, by their three citations over their own signatures declare themselves ready to be the Seceded congregation, straying from the pure doctrine and discipline, not wholly unlike those of Labadie, Koelman, and other Schismatics.<sup>51</sup>

Perhaps an even clearer indication that Frelinghuysen's pietistic tendencies were basic to the controversy, is a statement by the opposition concerning the effect of the Domine's preaching as well as his procedure.

Rev. Morgan<sup>52</sup> observes that, under the ministrations of another, (namely Freylinghuysen) many of his congregation became entirely different people. These then remove and join themselves to a society which he [Mor-

46 A copy of the original Dutch manuscript is to be found in the Sage Library, New Brunswick Seminary, New Brunswick.

47 In all, there were seventeen charges directed against Frelinghuysen (*Ecclesiastical Records*, VI, 2352-55. See appendix for list of such charges and nature of Complaint, 165-66.

48 Henry P. Thompson, *History of the Reformed Church at Readington, New Jersey* (1719-1881), (New York, 1882), 11.

49 *Ecclesiastical Records*, IV, 2426.

50 *Klagte Von Eenige*, xi.

51 *Ibid.*, 29.

52 Joseph Morgan was a Presbyterian minister "but had the peculiar responsibility of serving both the Dutch and Scotch settlers of Monmouth County," in New Jersey.

gan] calls a sect . . . . and are close to Quakers and Anabaptists. . . .<sup>53</sup> Is it seeking to win souls to hold secret assemblies and conventicles, to which other anxious souls are not admitted, and at which a stranger, who does not belong to his cabal is silenced?<sup>54</sup>

The similarity between these meetings and the pietists' *Collegia Pietatis* is again striking. Popularized by Spener, private conventicles were instituted to promote piety, study, and the diffusion of experimental religion. Like the *Collegia Pietatis* in Germany which tended to break down class distinction, the revival methods begun under Frelinghuysen also tended to disrupt exclusiveness. August Herman Francke's "attack on the 'lukewarmness and deadness of the clergy' as the cause of general religious apathy might well be compared with the vehemence of Schureman, Frelinghuysen, or Gilbert Tennent."<sup>55</sup>

In view of such a far-reaching controversy it was but natural that the Classis of Amsterdam would write to the accused minister.<sup>56</sup> In reply to the question why he was so severe in his procedure, Frelinghuysen declared that Freeman and others had consented to such a course and that he considered excommunication to be a privilege of the Consistory and not dependent on a decision by the Classis.<sup>57</sup> The Classis did not take issue with Frelinghuysen but merely tried to caution him in his procedure. Writing to him again in June, 1728, they state:

We have already referred to the harsh expressions which you have used in your reply. . . . Also in your manner of exercising discipline, even excommunication, on certain guilty persons, did you act as prudently as is becoming to a minister, in such an important matter? Were there such errors in doctrine or life in those you dealt with, that they deserved excommunication? And even if this were the case, would it not have

<sup>53</sup> *Klagte Von Eenige*, 32-35.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>55</sup> P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, *T. J. Frelinghuysen*, 57.

<sup>56</sup> The following is part of the letter written to Frelinghuysen by the Classis in June 1726:

"Reverend, Godly, and Highly Learned Sir, and Beloved Brother:

Some time ago there was placed in our hands the little book which accompanies this letter, styled "Complaint of Certain Members of the Dutch Reformed Church living at Raritan," etc., respecting the action of yourself and Consistory towards these Complainants, who are the authors and senders of the same. This complaint was laid on our table with the desire that we should give judgment upon it, and if possible, redress and prevent all irregularities which might be found to have happened on either side.

We have had this writing examined by our Committee. It is very prolix and contains many things worthy of no attention; nevertheless it contains evidences of great divisions and estrangements in your churches, whose glory should be Love and Peace. . . (See *Ecclesiastical Records*, IV, 2381 f.)

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 2417.

been safer not to take such an important step without first consulting the Classis?<sup>58</sup>

It can hardly be admitted that the Domine's dictatorial policy was the best procedure. Nor must he necessarily be defended in this.<sup>59</sup> The situation in which he found himself was extreme and perhaps called for a more tactful approach. Yet the fact remains that even though many from his congregations allied themselves with Boel and other New York clergymen who regarded him as heretical and smacking of pietism and Quakerism, in the end Frelinghuysen won out; even to the extent of winning many of the opposing leaders. Most convincing here are the Domine's own words.

Although our adversaries shut our churches, so that we were compelled to preach in barns, as was the case Anno 1725, showing by what spirit they were actuated; Yet, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Notwithstanding our opponents wrote a book against us, which appeared Anno 1725, full of lies, and false accusations, (as has been shown in their replies by two reverend brethren), the Lord has so ordered it that it has resulted in the furtherance of the truth.

..... Although we had opposed to us not only uneducated wealthy country people, but also learned and acute divines (principally Dutch) we were yet not compelled to keep silence; for we had a good cause, a good conscience, and the Mighty One of Jacob on our side.

Although many complaints were preferred against us to the Rev. Classis of Amsterdam, so remarkably did the Lord aid us in our defence, that we were pronounced orthodox, and the disaffected were exhorted to peace, and a return to the bosom of the Church.<sup>60</sup>

Not only, however, did Frelinghuysen stop the months of the opposition but his congregations in general began to thrive. "Revivals and 'ingatherings' followed in his wake; his labors were commended by George Whitefield, Gilbert Tennent, and Jonathan Edwards."<sup>61</sup> He trained several men for the ministry, advocated the establishment of a college and theological seminary and urged the Dutch churches to govern themselves instead of deferring to the Classis of Amsterdam.<sup>62</sup> He greatly exerted his

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Frelinghuysen himself admits that he had erred. (See *Ecclesiastical Records*, IV, 2459.) "That which the Classis demands of me, as the way toward peace, is this: that I should freely confess, that in several instances, things might have been said or done somewhat differently. . . To all this, I yield, out of love of peace, and from respect for the Classis. . ."

<sup>60</sup> T. J. Frelinghuysen, *Sermons*, 353-54.

<sup>61</sup> "Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen," *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Johnson and Malone, VII, 17-18.

<sup>62</sup> Frelinghuysen "probably is the person who is responsible for the first suggestion of the establishment of a college in America for the education of Dutch youths. The college came into existence in 1766 (Queens college), changed in

influence by publishing several of his sermons for instruction as well as defence. Such methods enabled Frelinghuysen to reach beyond his own immediate congregations. The new revival was spreading from the Raritan Valley to other parts. This was even indicted by his enemies, when they declared,

Why did he not remain among the congregations to which he had been sent and over which he had been installed as pastor, and first of all seek to restore souls . . . why, then, did he so often, on Sundays, withhold from his own congregations their spiritual food, allowing himself frequently to be found in other places, and preaching there.<sup>63</sup>

In sticking to his pietistic principles in face of all controversy and opposition, Frelinghuysen became a pioneer revivalist, whose significance, as already mentioned, was recognized by such leaders as the Tennents, Edwards, and Whitefield. It is in them, both in their testimonies and work, that we find the full fruition of Frelinghuysen as a basic factor in colonial revivalism. His most immediate significance, aside from the Dutch revival, lies in the influence exerted on the third phase of colonial revivalism<sup>64</sup>—the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, particularly the graduates of William Tennent's "Log College."

Gilbert Tennent, the oldest son of William Tennent, Senior, who was to become the great figure in this next phase of revivalism, was called to the Presbyterian church at New Brunswick while Frelinghuysen's revival was perhaps at its peak. Precise information as to the earliest companionship between Tennent and Frelinghuysen is scarce, yet available extracts sufficiently indicate "how directly Frelinghuysen's interest in pietism was reflected in the Puritanism of young Gilbert Tennent."<sup>65</sup> The Domine's critics and a letter written by young Tennent himself provide more than sufficient evidence in this direction. The former writing to the Classis in 1726 (the year Tennent came to the Presbyterian Church in New Brunswick)<sup>66</sup> state:

In reply to your request for further information as to how matters stand

1825 to Rutgers college. . . He was an early advocate for the establishment of an ecclesiastical judicatory in this country, with more enlarged powers than hath hitherto been granted by the Church in Holland." (See Edward T. Corwin (ed.), *A Manual of the Reformed Church in America*, 1628-1922, 5th ed., New York, 1859, 335 f.)

63 *Klagte Von Eenige*, 101-02.

64 Maxson, *The Great Awakening*, 18 f.

65 P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, *T. J. Frelinghuysen*, 46. (See also Maxson, *The Great Awakening*, 27).

66 MSS., "Extracts from the Church Records—Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia" (Presbyterian Historical Society); see also *Minutes of Synod of Philadelphia*, 1726, 83 f.

with the English Dissenter (Gilbert Tennent) we reply: That this information appears from our previous letter to you, viz., that he preaches (in our churches) in the English language; and such information further appears from the paper inclosed. This says that he is an English Dissenter, and also indicates fully his collusion [zamenſpan] with Rev. Frelinghuysen and his Consistory. . . . During these conjoint services of him and Frelinghuysen, he administers the Covenant Seals, mingling the English and Dutch languages with such other in the worship. Rev. Frelinghuysen preaches and Tennent prays and baptizes; and then together they administer the Holy Supper. . . .<sup>67</sup>

In the light of so close a companionship Frelinghuysen's influence on the youthful Tennent is easily understood. Writing to Thomas Prince of Boston in 1744, Tennent describes such an influence on both himself and surrounding communities.

The labors of the Reverend Mr. Frelinghuysen, a Dutch minister, were much bless'd to the People of New Brunswick and places adjacent, especially about the Time of his coming among them, which was about twenty-four years ago.

When I came there, which was about seven years after, I had the pleasure of seeing much of the fruits of his Ministry; divers of his Hearers with whom I had the Opportunity of conversing, appeared to be converted Persons, by their Soundness in Principle, Christian Experience, and Pious Practice; and these Persons declared that the Ministrations of the afore-said Gentleman were the Means thereof. This, together with a kind letter which he sent me respecting the Necessity of dividing the word aright, and giving to every man his Portion in due season, thro' the divine Blessing, excited me to greater Earnestness in ministerial Labors.<sup>68</sup>

William Tennent, Jr., a younger brother of Gilbert, whose work as a revivalist is highly praised by Jonathan Edwards,<sup>69</sup> also reveals the tremendous influence of Frelinghuysen's work. Writing about conditions in the early years of the great Reformer's ministry, he states:

Family Prayer was unpractis'd by all, a very few excepted; ignorance so overshadowed their Minds, that the Doctrine of the new Birth when clearly explained, and powerfully press'd upon them, as absolutely necessary to Salvation (by that faithful Preacher of God's Word, Mr. Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghouse, a Low Dutch Minister . . .) was made a common Game of; so that not only the Preachers but Professors of that truth were called in Derision New-Born, and look'd upon as holders forth of some new and false Doctrine. And indeed their Practice was as bad as their Principles, viz., loose and prophane.<sup>70</sup>

Of still wider significance is the acknowledgment of the

<sup>67</sup> *Ecclesiastical Records*, IV, 2587.

<sup>68</sup> Thomas Prince, *The Christian History* (Boston, 1745), 13-18.

<sup>69</sup> Edwards, *Narrative of Surprising Conversions*, 24.

<sup>70</sup> Prince, *The Christian History*, 299.



great Whitefield, who wrote from New Brunswick in November, 1739:

Among others who came to hear the Word, were several ministers whom the Lord had been pleased to honour, in making them instruments of bringing many souls to glory. One was a Dutch minister, named Freeling Housa, pastor of a congregation about four miles off New Brunswick; he is a worthy soldier of Jesus Christ, and was the beginner of the great work which I trust the Lord is carrying on in these parts.—He has been strongly opposed by some persons, but God has always appeared for him in a surprising manner, and made him more than conqueror through his Love. . . He has long since learnt to fear him only who can destroy both body and soul in hell.<sup>71</sup>

Frelinghuysen could have found no better place to spread his seed of revivalism than on Tennent soil. Gilbert Tennent became known on both sides of the ocean "as the foremost Presbyterian promoter of the Great Awakening."<sup>72</sup>

71 Whitefield's Journal, November, 1739, quoted by P. H. B. Frelinghuysen, *T. J. Frelinghuysen*, 62.

72 Maxson, *The Great Awakening*, 16.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### A DOCUMENTED HISTORY OF THE FRANCISCAN ORDER 1182-1517

By RAPHAEL HUBER, O.F.M. Conv. Washington, D. C.: Published by the author, 1944. xxxiv, 1,028 pages. \$7.50.

One is not surprised to learn that thirty years of research have gone into the making of this volume and the one to follow. The result of these painstaking labors in everyday proximity to the literary treasures and contemporary personalities of Papacy and Order is the most meticulously delineated history of Franciscan vicissitudes to appear in English thus far. For the first time, the English reader may consider in intimate relationship the varied sectors of Franciscan life and thought usually treated in detached segments. Furthermore, this is a volume frankly presented as a *documented* history with no attempt to placate readers who are hypersensitive to learned notes and minute details of scholarship. The unquestioning devotion to the Church and the massive collocation of materials involving both primary sources and secondary authorities are truly in the tradition of the revered Dr. Pastor with whom the author once studied at Innsbruck. Whatever one's reservations as to the character of Father Huber's objectivity, and however divergent the reader's interpretation from that of the author, one fact is patent enough: unusual opportunities for research have been capitalized by a talented scholar of undoubted industry and large powers of selection to produce a highly useful history and an invaluable work of reference.

Some values are necessarily sacrificed when an author follows Dr. Huber's plan of adducing variegated support for every significant detail—and some not so significant—in the development of a movement. It is quite understandable that the sweep of events may then be obstructed, the color of personalities diminished, and the interpretation of issues sometimes blunted in the amassing of an intricate report. Even then, however, one finds reassurance in that there is always provided a large body of verifiable data accompanied by a generous supply of documents and authorities with which to build one's own acceptance or rejection of the author's forthright conclusions.

Because there is such a large measure of scholarly objectivity and so few atmospheric generalizations, and since Father Huber evinces so much Christian irenicism in his treatment of the aggravated issues that turmoiled the Order, the reviewer feels free to make more specific his own constructively critical evaluation of the book. Regret must first be expressed that, in spite of the formidable obstacles presented by a work of such enormous detail and the multiplied problems of proof reading in war time, the author did not apprehend more of the mutilations of personal names and book titles which mar the references to such noteworthy schol-

ars as Heimbucher, Golubovich, Sabatier, Little, Muzzey, Helyot, Davison, and others. Greater consistency could have been observed, or at least some key to diversified usage supplied, for terminology including Joachists, Joachimists, Joachimism, and Joachinism. Occasionally, the omission of a work like that of Nicholson on mysticism or of Scudder's sympathetic treatment of the Spirituals in *The Franciscan Adventure* fails of explanation on the grounds of selectivity alone. Again, in the remarkably useful Part III, the selections of pertinent literature are grouped with scrupulous regard to original languages and translations but with little discrimination as to the varying canons of serious research and commercial acceptability. A like weakness is the failure in the extended and otherwise excellent analysis of source literature to distinguish in value the different editions or translations of a central document; for example, those of Rosedale and Ferrers-Howell for Celano, and Robinson and De La Warr for the writings of St. Francis. In his assessment of source critiques, the author calls attention to all the leading ones; but in several references to Moorman, for instance, he fails to indicate satisfactorily how large a challenge is issued by this scholar to accepted critical views with regard to Tres Socii, Celano, and many others.

A frequently excessive regard for prevailingly institutional reactions—especially those of the papacy—to all Franciscan ideals and issues doubtless makes it difficult for Father Huber to be completely just in dealing with extremist groups. In spite of his obvious desire for impartiality, his handling of representative views and typical writings is less gentle where Angelo, Ubertino, Ockham, and others like them are concerned than when he throws the mantle of fraternal charity over Elias and his kind. This may spring, in part at least, from one of the fundamental defects of the book: namely, the failure, at the very beginning, to examine in more than cursory fashion the inner character and implications of Francis' regard for poverty. Consequently, the most significant development in the Order's history, that is, its struggle over poverty interpretation, is left without a basis for fair judgment either as to fundamental virtues or inherent faults where varying groups are concerned. This same detached treatment of all but the more obvious qualities of Francis' renunciation leaves Father Huber embarrassedly tentative in his judgment of Father Felder's researches on Francis and learning; even as it makes his treatment of doctrines like eschatology wholly inadequate.

Nonetheless, when all accounts are balanced, this volume (and doubtless the one to come) will properly be seen as a work of indefatigable research, extremely valuable for the history of the Order, however, interpreted as to its evolution; a well-nigh indispensable book of reference; and a teaching instrument of authoritative and provocative worth. Less satisfactory for the Order's evolution than Gratien, less revealing as to the inner history of movements and men than Sessevalle, it is easily more full and precise in documentation than either.

Part III is well worth the separate publication that has been given it. Here are superbly organized studies on the sources for Francis and the Order; translations of the Rules of 1221 and 1223; the whole Franciscan system of organization; and useful, though not always adequate, guides to Franciscan schools, scholars, missions, liturgical contributions, and so-

cial activities. Also included are chronologies on a variety of Minorite and papal subjects, a four-fold index of 87 pages, and many acceptable plates and illustrations. This volume, which covers mainly the First Order to 1517, together with the continuation which will carry the history of all three families of the Order from 1517 to the present, can hardly fail of a large place in Franciscan historiography.

Duke University.

Ray C. Petry.

### THE CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE CABALA IN THE RENAISSANCE

By JOSEPH LEON BLAU. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944. viii, 167 pages. \$2.25.

The cabala, according to the author, roots in three basic Jewish doctrines: the exaltation of God, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and redemption through the Messiah. Gnostic, Persian, Moslem, or Christian influences in its development are variously postulated, but actually until near the end of the twelfth century little is known with certainty of its history. About that time there emerged three schools of cabala and numbers of prominent names from Joseph ben Abraham Gikatila (c. 1247-1305), to Moses Cordovero (1522-1570) of Safed in Galilee, with whom the movement attained its finest and culminating expression. A matter of the highest importance was the publication of the *Zohar* (*The Book of Splendor*) about 1300. It is "not a single book; it does not develop a consistent system, but behind its repetitious and discursive comment there lies a theosophical doctrine which is a riot of esotericism" (p. 10).

Central in the various forms of cabala was belief in the transcendence of God and in the ten progressively descending ranks of his manifestations, each consisting of four emanations, or in cabalistic terminology, *sephiroth*, through which he has created and rules the world and man. These forty have each a mystical name, and God himself has several, in the thought of one writer, seventy-two. But a name being almost identical with its object, these were infused with divine power. Cabalistic methods of exegesis, which must seem to us little better than fantastic juggling with scriptural words, elicited these names and other mystic "truths" from the most innocent passages. It will readily be seen thus how cabala diverged into magic, although its origin and real nature were religious.

The introduction of cabala to Christian thought was not the work of Raymond Lull in the thirteenth century, but notwithstanding some previous familiarity with the name it is to be attributed to Pico della Mirandola in the last quarter of the fifteenth, who included it in his characteristically Renaissance systematization of all thought. But Pico's knowledge of the system was imperfect, being based largely on the Bible commentary of Menahem ben Benjamin of Recanati, which was "actually a commentary on the *Zohar*." A few years later Reuchlin made his contribution to the growing interest. And so the study of cabala by Christians spread through western Europe, and while by no means universally accepted its popu-

larity remained high through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The appeal of cabala was diverse, all the way from an intellectual interest to occult purposes. But a striking feature was that for its exponents it seemed to lend support to distinctive Christian doctrines. That there was more to this than distortion of a fantastic system by Christian apologists is apparent in the apostasy to Christianity of a number of cabalistic Jewish scholars, the greatest of whom was Paul Ricci.

"None of the Christian interpreters knew much about cabala. Ricci, of course, knew most. Even Reuchlin was preëminently indebted to one author. The works of Gikatila, Recantis' Bible commentary and the *Book of Formation* practically sum up the knowledge of the interpreters, save Ricci. There was no conception in their minds, or even in the mind of Pistorius at the end of the sixteenth century, of the vastness of Hebrew cabalistic literature" (p. 113).

The value of Blau's work is enhanced by a bibliography of fifteen pages, and by lengthy summaries of various sixteenth century works, notably Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico*. Also there is included a translation of the complete text of Ricci's *In cabalistarum seu allegorizantium eruditionem isagoge*, as well as twenty-three pages of selections from the manuscript poem of Thenaud. The worth of the three brief appendices on Cordovero, Archangelus, and the problem of Lull's knowledge of cabala likewise should not be overlooked. It is a stimulating work, its merit attested in the disappointment one must feel that the author so strictly limited himself to his period and to the formulation of his topic. He has, succeeded in suggesting the question, but obviously without answering it, how far Christian thought in its popular expressions is to this day influenced by cabala. One commonly meets exegetical methods and theological ideas that possess obvious similarity to those of the cabala. Likewise in regard to the Renaissance period, the reader gains little impression, from the bulk of citation and interpretation here surveyed, of the extent to which, if at all, cabala was moulding the central stream of Christian thinking.

The University of Chicago.

William A. Irwin.

#### THE LOCI COMMUNES OF PHILIP MELANCHTHON

With a Critical Introduction by the translator, CHARLES LEANDER HILL.  
Boston: Meador Publishing Company, 1944. 274 pages. \$3.00.

This welcome translation of one of the three important works of the Protestant Reformation is made on the basis of Kolde's last edition of Plitt's text, collated with the version in the *Corpus Reformatorum* and Georg Spalatin's German version. All of these printed versions have been compared by the author himself with the original manuscript of Melanchthon in the Ducal Library at Gotha. We are here presented then with a careful and critical translation of the *Loci Communes*, the first systematic Protestant Theology.

As a translation pure and simple this book should find its place in classroom and study for the version is certainly accurate, if a bit too formal, and it is accompanied by enough notation to illuminate the text. Sometimes the translation is stilted and without verve but on the whole



it is true to the original. The Introduction is certainly more enthusiastic than critical, weighted by a heavy learning which is not always factually accurate. Sometimes the writer's enthusiasm leads him to a statement like this:

Such a view of God which Melancthon voices steers clear of the deterministic predestination of Luther and the rigid Stoicism of Calvin (p. 44).

If the Introduction is cautiously accepted, and words like *theologaster* (p. 106) overlooked, this book becomes a useful tool in the study of the history of Protestant theology.

Boehm's Parsonage,  
Blue Bell, Pennsylvania.

John Joseph Stoudt.

### REVIVALISM IN AMERICA

By WILLIAM WARREN SWEET. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944.  
xv, 192 pages. \$2.00.

Professor Sweet's book has established a place as a sketch both instructive and stirring of a characteristic feature of American religion which gives to this the importance belonging to it but frequently not ascribed to it. The revival still suffers from an intellectual and spiritual snobbery originating with Charles Chauncy and perpetuated since. By most general historians and many church historians and many religious people it is still equated with emotional extravagancies and getting the power. This book, popular in a good sense, will counteract this. Though brief it is compact with significant information and illuminating comment.

Controversies about words are tiresome; but a question about a word in the title presses. "Revivalism" in its generally accepted sense signifies a certain method or pattern of religious activity, so familiar in this country as not to need description, and its accompaniments, among them reliance on the method for religious advance and insistence on the particular type of religious experience fostered by method. There can be revivals without revivalism, and revivalism without revival; also there is revivalism with revival, which is the case for the method. This book is about revivals in America. Many of those described, for example "the revival at Yale under the leadership of President Timothy Dwight", did not arise from the method. In view of the meaning usually attached to the word, to cover all strengthenings of religious life in America by "revivalism" is confusing.

Nearly two-thirds of the book are given to the Great Awakening, which seems disproportionate. Not as explanation, but as "setting the stage", emphasis is laid upon the large parts of the colonial population which were weakened religiously by uprooting and migration and loss of religious associations. This idea is again dwelt upon in the account of revivals connected with later movements westward. Doubtless there is a relation between the large place taken by revivals in American history and the fact that American society in much of this history has been "in motion". But it has remembered, as showing that this does not cover all the ground, that some powerful revivals, such as those of the Second Awakening in Connecticut, have broken out in settled and stable populations. In Professor Sweet's description of religious and moral conditions among the

uprooted colonials there is much to correct popular laudatory misapprehensions. More correction appears in the account of Frelinghuysen and "the Log College Evangelists" in New Jersey. It is still written that the Awakening began with Edwards. This chapter sets things right, in a way which will be noticed. The same chapter gives a lively picture of Samuel Davies, a descendant of the Log College, in his evangelism which aroused strong religious life in central Virginia and served religious freedom there—a great man of colonial Christianity, too little known.

To a chapter on "The Colonial Revivalist-Theologians: Jonathan Dickinson and Jonathan Edwards" we are indebted for doing right by another great man of colonial Christianity, and colonial Presbyterianism, Dickinson. But really there is little in this chapter living up to its title, little showing the relation between theology and the revival. These theologians were Calvinists, and Professor Sweet several times speaks of "the colonial Calvinistic revivalists" as "personalizing Calvinism". But Calvinistic election is in essence the most individualistic form of Christianity possible, and how it could be made more "personal" is hard to see. There must have been some other element of thought at the basis of the Awakening. Such there was, and it was a theological idea, the new birth, regeneration. Dickinson and Edwards are full of this, and so was all of the characteristic preaching of the Awakening. This was the cardinal message of Whitefield, of whose power in binding together and supporting the revival Professor Sweet well speaks. It seems as though this might have been mentioned; and also as though there might have been somewhere a discussion of the important influence of the revival on American theological thought, as well as of theology on the revival. More things not well enough known are described in the chapter on "The Revivalists who Brought Religion to the Common Man"—the work of Devereux Jarratt and the early Methodists and of the Baptist evangelists in Virginia. This strikes a note dwelt upon earlier in the book, the democratizing of the churches and the general promotion of democracy effected by the Awakening.

"Revivalism and the Westward March" goes beyond its title, being a sketch of the frontier evangelism of Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians. Chiefly dealing with the Second Awakening, this chapter would have been balanced by reference to this great movement in the seaboard states, where American Christianity showed itself quite as revivalistic, without some extremes. The chapter closes with the work of Finney, in whom indeed we reach revivalism as a method, emphasizing his impulse to the anti-slavery movement and other social reforms. "Revivalism's By-Products" speaks of bad effects, church divisions, degradation of worship and hymnody, excessive emotionalism, and of the services of "the revivalistic churches" over a long period to education and reform, which are not exactly products of "revivalism". After all this history of revivals in America one desiderates more clear statement of the direct products, the amount of strengthening of the churches. In "Revivalism on the Wane" the author seems to disapprove of tendencies in modern American religion, the social gospel and religious education, as weakening individualism, and the effect of psychological study in discrediting emotion, the result of which has been that "emotion has been . . . completely squeezed out of present-day Protestant worship". These things, he thinks, explain the un-

doubted "wane". Not everyone acquainted with modern church life will agree with this discouraged diagnosis, ending a book which otherwise has strong elements of hope.

Union Theological Seminary.

Robert Hastings Nichols.

### SOCIALIZATION OF THE NEW ENGLAND CLERGY 1800—1860

By GORDON A. RIEGLER. Greenfield, Ohio: The Greenfield Printing and Publishing Company, 1945. 187 pages.

Observing the emphasis given to the social gospel in the years following the Civil War, the author has explored the period 1800 to 1860 for evidence of social mindedness in the clergy. His book is a modest one: "This is not a doctoral dissertation, nor does the author make any pretension of having written the last word on the subject. . . . He has read rather extensively . . . and has tried to report faithfully what he has found." His purpose is to present the social ideals of some of the ministers in the New England churches. The book were better entitled *The Social Ideas of the New England Clergy*. The author has gone to the writings of the more outstanding clergymen to find what they may have said on education, gambling, duelling, drinking, women and children, philanthropy, housing, health, amusements, the race question and slavery, government, the penal system, agriculture, industry, and war and peace, and has set down his findings, concluding that some of the New England clergy were socially minded. No attempt is made to discover any evolving philosophy of religion, no orientation is made with the humanitarianisms of the Middle Period, little grasp is revealed of the impinging economic revolution. Though the Unitarians quoted seem to be more socially minded than other clergymen, there is no suggestion of the bearing of religious liberalism upon advanced social thought. True, these omissions were not part of the author's design but their omission restricts the usefulness of the book. The bibliography is enriched by five pages of contemporary pamphlets. However such pertinent studies as John H. Krout, *The Origins of Prohibition*, and Merle Curti, *Peace or War*, are missing from the bibliography and seem not to have been used by the author. Twenty-eight pages of footnotes are bunched at the end of the book to this reviewer's utter distress. Too many typographical errors escaped the proof-reader, though "immortality" for "immorality" is a little compensation. This is not a significant book but it does make clear that some New England clergy were concerned with social problems in the years 1800 to 1860.

Rutgers University.

Irving Stoddard Kull.

### THE MIDNIGHT CRY

By FRANCIS D. NICHOL. Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1944. Takoma Park, Washington, D. C.: Price \$3.50.

The arresting and significant title chosen by the author is followed by a secondary one which rather accurately reveals the purpose and content

of the book: "A Defense of the Character and Conduct of William Miller and the Millerites, Who Mistakenly Believed That the Second Coming of Christ Would Take Place in the Year 1844." The reader is impressed throughout with the author's desire to present Miller and his movement in the most favorable and appreciative light, and therefore to prune away from the Miller tradition all exaggerations and misrepresentations which originated with contemporaries of the prophet and which have entered into much otherwise scientific history writing. The work is well documented, with copious references to materials from Miller's correspondence and other writings, as well as from contemporary reports and comments. The author frankly admits, even defends, his partisanship, being a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with Millerite connections, and therefore generously rules himself out as an objective student in the commonly accepted sense.

The volume begins biographically, sketching the background and career of Miller in New England and New York. His poverty, his largely self-improvised education, his literary inclinations, and unusual religious curiosity are stressed. It is pointed out that under the influence of deism he became skeptical of his earlier religious beliefs, and turned to political office and later to army life, reaching the rank of captain in the War of 1812. Returning to the farm, he experienced a profound religious awakening which restored his faith and redirected his life. Miller's intensive and literalistic study of the Scriptures, assisted only by a concordance, led him to the conclusion that prophecies couched in figurative language are nevertheless fulfilled literally.

Convinced, after thirteen years of study and rechecking, that the prophecies pointed to 1843 (or to some time within the year ending Mar. 21, 1844), Miller began (1831) his proclaiming. Calls soon multiplied until he could not begin to fill the engagements. Other ministers were soon convinced by his preaching, and the ranks of the Millerites increased. Their endeavor was to use the imminent end of the world as an instrument for speedy evangelization. Miller's license to preach was given him by the Baptists of Low Hampton, N. Y., in 1833. He was soon going from place to place preaching and distributing his pamphlets and books. His personal records show this was a labor of love for which only slight net profits were received, at least in the earlier years.

The fame of the frontiersman eventually reached the metropolitan areas and carried him from northern New England to Boston, where his views spread and his lectures found a hearing and publication. Other northeastern cities invited him, the New York tour being not overly successful. Before long the movement had its general conference sessions, took on more of organization and produced an extensive literature, both in periodical and book form. The camp-meeting phase led to greatest success (1842—) in the northeastern states, with many Millerite preachers participating. The periodicals, *Signs of the Times* and *The Midnight Cry*, soon reflected the growing criticism of the movement by the defensive material carried in their columns. Even the metropolitan press took up the fight against Millerism.

Disillusionment came slowly. The passing of the Roman year 1843

made little difference, for the end of the Jewish year the following March twenty-first could still be awaited. Then followed new calculations. When the first disappointment came, Miller acknowledged his error as to the date, still insisting that "the day of the Lord is near" and seeking in every way to conserve the results of the religious ingathering.

The die-hards, basing their hopes on recalculations by Samuel Snow, next looked toward October 22, 1844 as the time of the great event; and it was in the period of several months preceding this date that the greatest fanaticism was shown. Fields went untended, crops unharvested. Many who had backslidden after March 21st were reclaimed. Great ingatherings of converts resulted, and "separation from the churches" was urged as a flight from "Babylon." The frenzy increased as October 22nd came very near. The author plays down these excesses as much as possible, though much of the contemporary testimony quoted is difficult to explain away.

The great day itself was a fairly tame occasion, according to the contemporary evidence accredited by the author. Religious services, often of a semi-private character, marked the day. Groups of the faithful met in their tabernacles and in private homes, sometimes with police protection. The passing of midnight brought weeping and oral and written expressions of disappointment. It was necessary for some to pool their funds to survive until economic life could be organized anew. A withering ridicule set in upon them. It is in this period apparently that most of the folklore took form about the Millerites and their behaviour on the great day. Much of this approaches the vicious, and the author does a real service in seeking to winnow the truth from the falsehood.

It was not long until the Millerites were able to rationalize all that had gone before as something contrived by God; and the paper *The Midnight Cry* significantly became *The Morning Watch*. In 1845 the Adventists were endeavoring to hold the movement together by a conference at Albany. Miller died in 1849, frankly admitting the failure of his method of date-setting, but believing still in the imminent coming of his Lord.

Three chapters are devoted to the question of whether the Millerites wore ascension robes. Like the chapters on insanity, these would seem to comprise entirely too much space for the importance of the subject. Again, much is waived aside as rumor. At least one is impressed with the volume of research required to produce these sections of the study. The conclusion that the stories grew with the years would seem plausible. The closing chapters defend the doctrines of the Millerites as much in keeping with the orthodox views of the major Protestant groups which, incidentally, contributed most of the converts to the movement. Historic creeds are quoted to prove this. The Millerites were simply more definite and more active in setting out to do something about their apocalyptic views. They were painstakingly biblical, though without the tools of historical and literary criticism. Moreover, their spiritual followers are legion among the small holiness sects today, not to mention the main Adventist bodies, which lay great stress upon the book of Daniel and the Revelation of John. The final chapter sums up the author's conclusion much as a debater would, giving the movement a remarkably clear slate. Valuable documentary material is contained in the lengthy appendices to the book. Anyone in-



terested in the more spontaneous religious movements in America will find this volume both entertaining and informing.

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### WAR, PEACE AND NONRESISTANCE

By GUY FRANKLIN HERSHBERGER. Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: The Herald Press, 1944. xv, 415 pages. \$2.50.

In the multitude of books in its field Professor Hershberger's stands out for solidity, consistency and honesty. Emphatically his own book, it has special significance by being in good measure an expression of the mind of his church. In a foreword Dean Bender says that its writing "was undertaken some years ago as a commission from the Peace Problems Committee of the Mennonite Church." It is long, and though somewhat repetitious covers so much ground that in a review much of its contents can be merely suggested. An exposition of the Biblical basis of Mennonite nonresistance maintains a position to which, it appears, not all Mennonites agree, that the Old Testament as well as the New forbids war. This the author endeavors to make good by the device of two wills of God, His "fundamental moral laws" against killing, and a "permissive will." Though developed at length, this is not convincing; but it is of secondary importance, because the Mennonite doctrine founds principally on the New Testament, and here all Mennonites agree. The full discussion of New Testament teaching, supplemented by an appendix on "Some Difficult Scriptures", concludes that "the nonresistant way of life is in accord with the whole teaching of the Gospel, and . . . does not rest on a few isolated passages."

Space will not allow deserved attention to a long, instructive and very interesting account of the fortunes of the Mennonites from the sixteenth century to the twentieth, in Europe and the Americas, with special reference to their attitude toward and in war, which is traced to the Anabaptists. Their migrations to avoid military service make a signal record of fidelity to conscience. Their generous relief work in modern times ought to be better appreciated. Detailed consideration is given to the experiences of the Mennonites in World Wars I and II. The treatment of some of them in the army in World War I was a disgrace to the United States. There is a full authoritative history of conscientious objectors in both wars, including others than Mennonites. And regarding World War II the workings of Civilian Public Service and of the NSBRO, representing the "historic peace churches", are recorded in valuable form. The author returns to this in what may be called the systematic part of his book, in which chief interest will probably be felt.

This begins with a chapter on "Nonresistance and the State in Modern Life" which enforces the position that "the nonresistant Christian should have an obedient and respectful attitude toward the state and its ruler." He will subordinate himself to civil authority until "the state requests him to violate God's moral law and the principle of non-resistance"; then he will refuse, and if need be suffer, but not resist. "Nonresistant Christians

should be the most law-abiding citizens of the state." But though law-abiding, the nonresistant Christian must abstain not only from military action but from any action under the state involving force. Anabaptist refusal of magistracy persists. "It would seem difficult . . . for a believer in New Testament nonresistance to hold . . . any responsible executive, legislative or judicial position in a modern state." This applies also to local government, save in a very limited way. All this is recognized as requiring "definite detachment" from the life of organized society. But it is held that "the Christian must remember that his highest duty is to God and not to society."

This sentence states what is central to an elaborate statement of the distinctive Mennonite position in two chapters on "Biblical Nonresistance and Modern Pacifism." The ideal is a community of persons obedient to the will of God according to the Scriptures. Of this obedience nonresistance is a conspicuous expression, but not the whole. "Christian nonresistance is a fruit, not a root. It is one of the ethical teachings of the Gospel; it is not the Gospel itself." The community obedient to God is the kingdom of God, not social changes. "The kingdom of God which the New Testament speaks of . . . is made up of Christians . . . who have been saved from a sinful world to a life of service to God. Such Christians are concerned for the welfare of humanity, and their influence may be considerable. But such changes as this influence may bring about within the sinful society of this world, however worth while they may be, do not constitute the kingdom of God." This passage, and the absolute principle of nonresistance, together explain the differences of the Mennonite effort for peace from others, as stated in these chapters. Mennonites are not interested in plans for international authority in the interest of peace, for these rest on force. They dissent from the Quakers, because they, or many of them, do not "view the sinful nature of society as seriously as the Mennonites do", and consequently engage in political activity for peace and other good ends.

Mennonites dissent from modern "liberal Protestant pacifism", which "has been greatly influenced by the ideas of the social gospel." This is represented, rather unjustly, as teaching that "the only salvation is social salvation", which means "making the world better by education and reform", seeking "to remake the community, the city, the state, and the international world." Accordingly this kind of pacifism designs to use the state as an instrument to bring in an order of peace. But Mennonites hold that all this involves "a wrong conception of sin, of Christianity, and of the kingdom of God." From "nonviolence" or "nonviolent coercion," taught by some Quakers, there is strong dissent, on the ground that this is the use of force, only stopping short of killing. The "satyagraha" of Gandhi is severely criticized. His "program is not one of nonresistance or peace. It is a new form of warfare," therefore essentially non-Christian. "Much of the popular pacifism of today", Professor Hershberger says, "is a mixture of religious liberalism, the social gospel, and Satyagraha." But from all this Mennonites turn away: "New Testament nonresistance is concerned first with obedience to God and the creation of loving brotherhood."

The distinctive position of the Mennonites comes to clear expression in an informing account of the experiences in World War II of their conscientious objectors, as compared with those of other groups. Mennonites—

or those who were true to the teachings of their church, for not all were such—standing for obedience to government, object “not to conscription as such,” only to military service, and conform to the government’s requirement of alternative service. “From the viewpoint of Biblical nonresistants like the Mennonites the C. P. S. system was about as satisfactory a solution of the conscription problem as could have been found.”

Not withdrawing anything that he has said, Professor Hershberger adds a chapter on “The Service of Nonresistance to Society,” to refute the charge that it is a parasite. This service he holds is first in bearing witness “to the way of truth and righteousness,” by which nonresistants fulfill a higher mission than they would “if they compromised their own high ethical principles to engage in the relativities of statecraft and political action.” Second, there is the contribution of the Mennonites and other nonresistants to religious freedom; “the modern idea of religious freedom was born and nurtured in the cradle of nonresistance.” Third, there is the exemplification of the idea of Christian brotherhood in Mennonite churches, which are concerned with the entire life of their members. Such communities, mostly rural, “living the Christian brotherhood type of life which has characterized them for centuries,” are, Professor Hershberger holds, making a contribution of first-rate importance to modern society.

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#### A LIST OF ARTICLES DEALING WITH THE FIELD OF CHURCH HISTORY

Compiled by J. H. Nichols

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